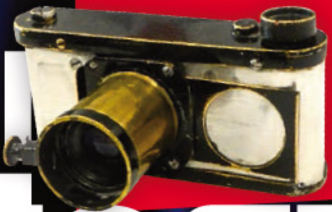
Tuesday 11 March 2025

Amateur Photographer



A proud history

The story behind the birth of the **first Leica** and the century of excellence that followed

PREMIUM EDITION
MARCH 2025

Passionate about photography since 1884

Leica's secret heroes

How Ernst Leitz II helped Jews to escape from Nazi Germany

Leica-loving legends

A roll-call of famous Leica users, from Cartier-Bresson to Stoddart

100 years of Leica

A tribute to the centenary of the camera that changed the world

Red dot devotees

Current users on what's so special about the brand

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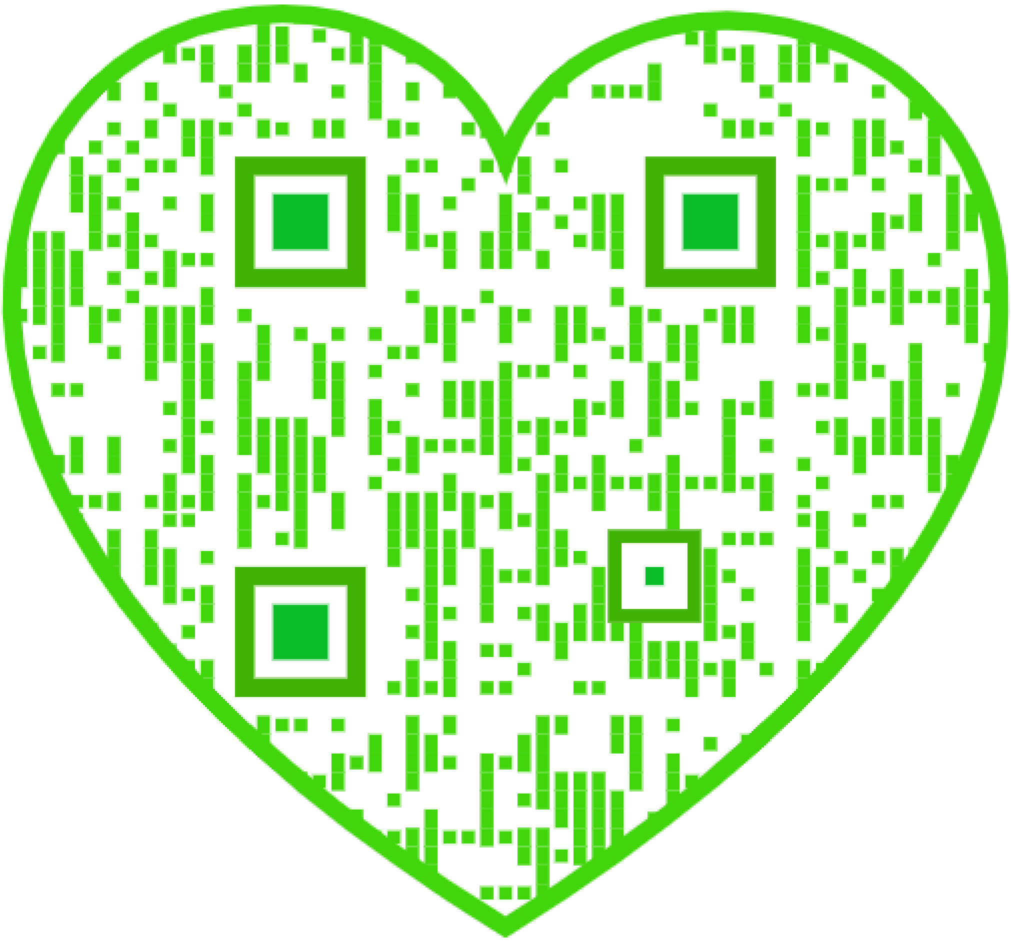

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PICTURE COURTESY OF LEITZ AUCTION, VIENNA

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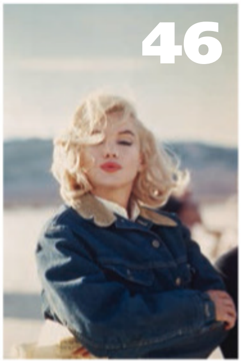

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© JOHN ROBERT YOUNG

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Welcome

To celebrate 100 years of Leica we've put together a very special issue, dedicated to a company that is part of the very DNA of modern photography. There are so many great stories to celebrate, past and present, so read on for a reminder of how the company became the creative and cultural force it is today, along with a tribute to the many great Leica photographers who've become synonymous with the brand. We also remind readers of Leica's heroic efforts to try to save the lives of Jewish people during the darkest days of WWII and, coming back to the present, there's an overview of the firm's current line-up, helping you find the right camera for you. Alles Gute zum Geburtstag, Leica!

Geoff Harris, Deputy Editor

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MAIN COVER PICTURE © NIGEL ATHERTON. CLOCKWISE FROM BOTTOM LEFT: © JESSE MARLOW / @ PICTURE COURTESY OF LEICA CAMERA AG / © PICTURE COURTESY OF WILLIAM FAGAN

Nigel Atherton photographed the three cameras and created the cover image for the issue. Our thanks to John Wade and to Leica for the loan of the cameras for the cover shoot.

THIS ISSUE'S CONTRIBUTORS

JOHN WADE

Our camera history expert traces the 100-year Leica story; and reveals the steps that led to the first Leica

PETER DENCH

Peter finds out more about Leica's wartime heroes; and writes about photojournalist John Robert Young

GEOFF HARRIS
Deputy Editor

Leicas have been used by some of the greats over the years – Geoff celebrates them

HOLLIE LATHAM HUCKER
Technique Editor

Hollie talks to pros in different fields, who all capture the world with Leicas

ANDY WESTLAKE
Technical Editor

Our resident chief reviewer guides you through the current line-up of Leica cameras

TRACY CALDER

The regular AP contributor asks five ambassadors why they love using Leica cameras and lenses

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The far-reaching Sony FE 400-800mm F6.3-8 G OSS

Major Sony lens releases

IT'S been a busy week for Sony with the company announcing two significant new lenses. First up is the Sony FE 400-800mm F6.3-8 G OSS telephoto zoom for full-frame cameras, one of the longest-reaching lenses produced by the company.

It's designed for bird, wildlife, sports and aircraft photography, along with other genres where a long telephoto zoom comes in hand. With a 2x teleconverter, the maximum reach can be expanded to 1600mm; the new lens also gives a zoom range of 600-1200mm on a crop frame APS-C camera, though it could overpower smaller camera bodies. The lens uses an internal zoom mechanism to help keep the centre of gravity in a small range, helping keep it steady when using handheld. Other key features include a 11-blade circular aperture, 27 elements in 19 groups (with 6 Extra-low Dispersion elements), a 105mm filter diameter, and a weight of 2,475g.

The Sony FE 400-800mm F6.3-8 G OSS is on sale now for an equally weighty £2,550.

Prime time

A rather more affordable option is the new Sony FE 16mm F1.8 G lens. It's a fast ultra-wideangle prime lens that is part of the firm's mid-range 'G' line, and includes an impressive feature set at a sensible price.

Optically, the lens has 15 elements in 12 groups. This includes 2 aspherical elements to maximise cross-frame sharpness, 3 made from extra-low dispersion (ED) glass and 1 from Super ED glass to suppress colour fringing. Autofocus is provided courtesy of two fast and quiet XD linear motors, with focus breathing suppressed optically to help with video recording. The lens supports both active and dynamic IS modes for handheld video recording with cameras that offer these features. It is dust and moisture-resistant and has a full set of on-body controls, including a click/declick switch for the aperture ring.

The Sony FE 16mm F1.8 G goes on sale from the beginning of April for £850.

The FE 16mm F1.8 G

DxO rolls out PureRAW 5

DXO has revealed version 5 of its well-regarded raw processing program, PureRAW. Beefed-up noise reduction features come courtesy of the firm's latest DeepPRIME 3 algorithm, which gains the ability to correct chromatic aberration as part of demosaicing and denoising; you can also selectively fine-tune denoising and sharpening using masks.

PR DxO PureRAW 5
Supercharge your cameras and lenses
Pre-order DxO PureRAW and get PureRAW free today!

Version 5 is set to arrive on 15 April

There's also a more streamlined interface, the ability to save custom presets, and access to the latest version of DxO's 'eXtra Detail' processing engine and other features when editing images from Fujifilm X cameras.

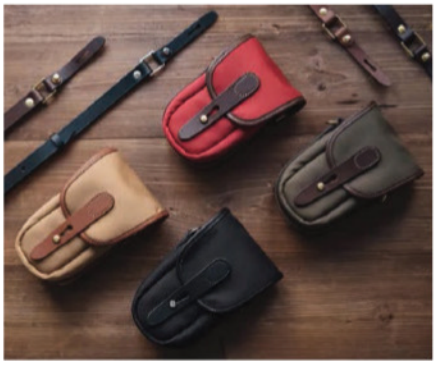
DxO PureRAW 5 is available from 15 April for £109 (new users) or £69.99 (discounted upgrade from PureRAW 3 and 4).

See dxo.com

New Sigma lenses are now just mirrorless only

Sigma's sayonara to DSLR lenses

AS WELL as announcing the Sigma BF full-frame camera and new lenses (see last week's news or amateurphotographer.com) the company also revealed that it has ceased development of new DSLR lenses. The newly announced lenses have dropped the DN designation, as Sigma says it's no longer needed – all new lenses are for mirrorless cameras only.



The Billingham TEN-16 comes in four colours

Stylish Billingham compact camera pouch

BILLINGHAM has introduced its first compact-camera pouch, the TEN-16. It's specifically designed to hold rangefinder-style models such as the popular Fujifilm X100 series, including the hit X100VI. More generally, it will accept cameras measuring up to about 14cm wide, 8cm tall, and 7cm deep, including the lens. This premium pouch is also Billingham's first to employ a leather shoulder sling – previously it's used webbing straps. The shoulder strap is removable, with the TEN-16 sporting leather straps on the back so that you can attach it to a belt. The pouch is available now in black, burgundy, sage or khaki for £129.

One of Josh Dury's images from *52 Assignments: Night Photography*

© JOSH DURY/AMMONITE PRESS

Why the long face...

THIS stunning 'astro-landscape' image from Easter Island was taken by AP contributor Josh Dury and appears in his new book, *52 Assignments: Night Photography*. It will be published by Ammonite Press at the end of April (exact date to be confirmed) and costs £12.99. 'From comets to meteor showers, auroras to eclipses, these celestial wonders remind us of the immensity of our universe,' says the publisher. 'These 52 assignments will show you how to photograph these natural wonders.' Josh has also been announced as a Sigma UK ambassador, so well done, sir!

The new 85mm and 50mm Otus lenses

© ZEISS

Zeiss Otus goes mirrorless

ZEISS has confirmed that it is releasing Otus ML 85mm F1.4 and 50mm F1.4 lenses for mirrorless cameras, specifically Sony E, Canon RF and Nikon Z mounts.

Both Otus ML line lenses feature a robust all-metal construction with weather-sealing and a natty modern design accented with engraved yellow markings for the aperture and depth-of-field scale. In an unusual approach, video shooters can declick the focus ring by adjusting a screw on the bayonet mount with a special tool.

The Otus ML 50mm F1.4 is built around 14 elements in 11 groups – 2 of which are aspheric and 4 special glass elements. The lens also has a 0.50m minimum focusing distance. At around 677g to 718g (depending on lens mount), it is on the heavier side compared to similar Sony, Canon and Nikon glass.

The Otus ML 85mm F1.4, meanwhile, weighs up to 1,061g thanks to the 15 elements in 11 groups.

The new line-up is available for pre-order now, with the 50mm F1.4 on sale in late spring for £2,100, and the 85mm F1.4 on sale later this year for £2,350.

Big phone news from Barcelona

AT THE recent Mobile World Congress trade show in Barcelona, Xiaomi announced the Xiaomi 15 and 15 Ultra – note that we named the Xiaomi 14 Ultra, the best advanced smartphone for photographers.

The Xiaomi 15 Ultra retains the quad Leica-branded camera set-up and one-inch sensor, but the 4.3x periscope lens has now quadrupled in pixel size to 200MP. Xiaomi claims that it lets in 136% more light than the predecessor, and 200MP should give plenty of scope for cropping. The Xiaomi 15 Ultra starts at £1,299 (16GB, 512GB of storage).

In addition, the company showed off a 35mm concept lens at the show, featuring a 100MP Micro Four Thirds sensor, with AF and an aperture range of f/1.4 to f/11; it transfers image data to the phone via a laser link and attaches via magnets. The lens remains at the concept stage but Xiaomi said it's exploring the options.

Samsung, meanwhile, launched three budget-friendly handsets – the Galaxy A56, A36 and A26 – with some AI features from its higher-end phones, such as 'Best Face' for changing expressions and object removal. The A series Samsung Galaxy A56, A36 and A26 will be available for £499, £399 and £299 respectively from 19 March.

© GEOFF HARRIS

The new Xiaomi 15 and top-end 15 Ultra

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Ralph Gibson. New York, USA, 1968. Leica M2

Leica M

£45, Leica Camera AG, hardback, 272 pages

Leica's in-house tribute to its legendary M-series rangefinder cameras is a treat for both photography lovers and camera geeks alike, as **Andy Westlake** finds out

There is, perhaps, no camera design quite as distinctive and iconic as that of the Leica M rangefinder. It's also ridiculously long-lived – the digital M11 that you can buy new today can trace its lineage directly to the original M3, which was released in 1954. To celebrate the M's 70th anniversary, Leica has put together this beautifully produced book that's packed full of both stunning photography and the history of the cameras. It really is a rare treat.

When I first picked up this book, I fully expected to be drawn into the story of how the Ernst Leitz Optical Works came to make the world's first practical 35mm camera. It's all here, too, with fascinating accounts of how the company continued to negotiate the camera market over the years and manage the transition from film to digital with what, let's face it, should rationally be an obsolete camera design. And somehow, against the odds, maintain the Leica's essence as a small, discreet, street-shooter's camera.

But in a way the cameras are just a sideshow here. Because Leica also innately understands that they are merely tools to create images, and the book is absolutely packed full of extraordinary photography. Some if it is familiar – the likes of Elliott Erwitt, Joel Meyerowitz and Ralph Gibson inevitably make an appearance – but a great deal of it was completely new to me. There are arresting and intriguing images from all around the world by perhaps lesser-known names: Alixandra Fazzini, Fulvio Bugani, Nicole Tung… I could go on.

Sadly, this isn't an easy book to find – it's available only from Leica's own outlets. It's not that easy to read, either, due to a distinctly small font. But if you can get your hands on a copy, it's worth every penny.

© ALIXANDRA FAZZINA / NOOR

Alixandra Fazzina. Zaranj, Afghanistan, 2012. Leica M9

© JASPER DOEST

Jasper Doest. Curacao, 2023. Leica M11

© EMIL GATAULLIN

Emil Gataullin. Yaroslavl, Russia, 2011

Books & exhibitions

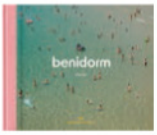
The latest and best books and exhibitions from the world of photography

© ROB BALL

After dark, there's lots to photograph here

Benidorm by Rob Ball

£35, Hoxton Mini Press, hardback, 112 pages, ISBN: 9781914314889



There are probably a great many of us who have enjoyed – or endured, depending on your point of view – a trip to Benidorm at some point during our lives.

The vibrant beach culture juxtaposed with the towering urban landscape also makes it quite an interesting place to take photographs, as Rob Ball has found out and displayed in this new volume.

Here on display are the sunlit palms, the shimmering neon lights, pastel-coloured high rises, bright pink beach towels – it's all quite mesmerising in its own way. We mustn't forget also the myriad colours found elsewhere – the pinks and reds of sunburn, a contrast from the greys and browns of the backstreets, too.

Designed as a testament to the energy and fun of this iconic holiday location, it's quite a treat to flick through the book and relive your own memories.

© ROB BALL

The resort is certainly a colourful place

Clockwise from left:

Saintes-Maries-de-la-Mer, France, 1977

Marilyn Monroe, Reno, USA, 1960

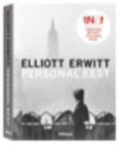
Coney Island, USA, 1975

Prado Museum, Madrid, Spain, 1995

ALL IMAGES © ELLIOTT ERWITT

Elliott Erwitt: Personal Best

£25, teNeues, softback, 448 pages, ISBN: 9783961716326



A revised edition celebrating the work of a legendary and masterful photographer is an absolute must-buy, says **Amy Davies**

Featuring hundreds of photographs across a whopping 448 pages, this revised and republished edition of a bestselling book is one that is hard to resist – especially at its very affordable price.

Containing some of the Magnum photographer's – and well-known Leica user, to fit in with the rest of this issue's theme – best and most personal work, it's a comprehensive survey of Erwitt's important legacy and impact on the wider photographic work.

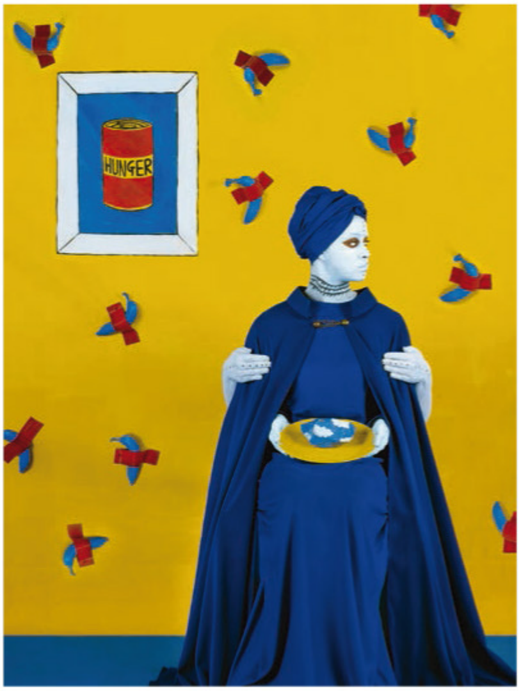
Indeed, the photographs span several decades, a testament to the volume and quality of his output. Recognised for his wit and warmth, it's not surprising that

his work has become so beloved by many who favour his irreverent style.

Each of the photographs will likely make you smile, but they may also make you think too – a wonderful combination that will have you turning the pages and revisiting the book time and time again. Erwitt himself selected the photographs that should be included in the book, which was first published several years ago.

Erwitt died in 2023, aged 95, having enjoyed a long and illustrious career, including being a long-time member of Magnum Photos (he joined in 1953) and serving as its president. He was widely travelled, but is perhaps particularly fondly remembered for his work in his adopted home city of New York. His work was featured in *LIFE, Collier's, Holiday* and other publications that were at their height in the 1950s and '60s. He later turned his hand to producing documentaries and even comedy films.

This edition of *Personal Best* has been re-published to coincide with the 40th anniversary of the first teNeues photo book. The publisher has been putting out more affordable, softcover versions of some of its big sellers in order to get the books into the hands of more of us – and I have to say that this is the most tempting proposition yet.



© AÏDA MULUNEH COURTESY BRADFORD 2025 UK CITY OF CULTURE AND IMPRESSIONS GALLERY

The Handmaid of Hunger, 2024, part of The Necessity of Seeing collection

Nationhood: Memory and Hope

Until 26 April
Impressions Gallery, Bradford
Admission free
See impressions-gallery.com for opening times

A modern look at the UK's four nations is found in this exhibition launched to kick off Bradford's year as the UK City of Culture for 2025.

It is designed to celebrate the diversity of the UK today, a 'love letter' to all that is good in England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales.

At the heart of the exhibition is a new collection of constructed images by the acclaimed photographer Aïda Muluneh, which she shot at iconic locations in Bradford, Belfast, Cardiff and Glasgow. Also included is A Portrait of Us, a set of black & white portraits of unsung community heroes from the same four cities.

As well as Muluneh's work, there's also some fantastic work by seven rising photographers working in the UK photography scene to explore issues of history, identity, race, gender and religion.

A wonderful exhibition, this is well worth a visit to the excellent Impressions Gallery to see. Once it has finished there, it will travel to Belfast Exposed, Ffotogallery in Cardiff and Street Level Photoworks in Glasgow, making it the first ever UK City of Culture project to take place in all four nations of the UK.

From the series Scotland Through Her Eyes

© HANEEN HADIY COURTESY IMPRESSIONS GALLERY AND BRADFORD 2025 UK CITY OF CULTURE

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Our favourite photos posted by readers on our social media channels this week

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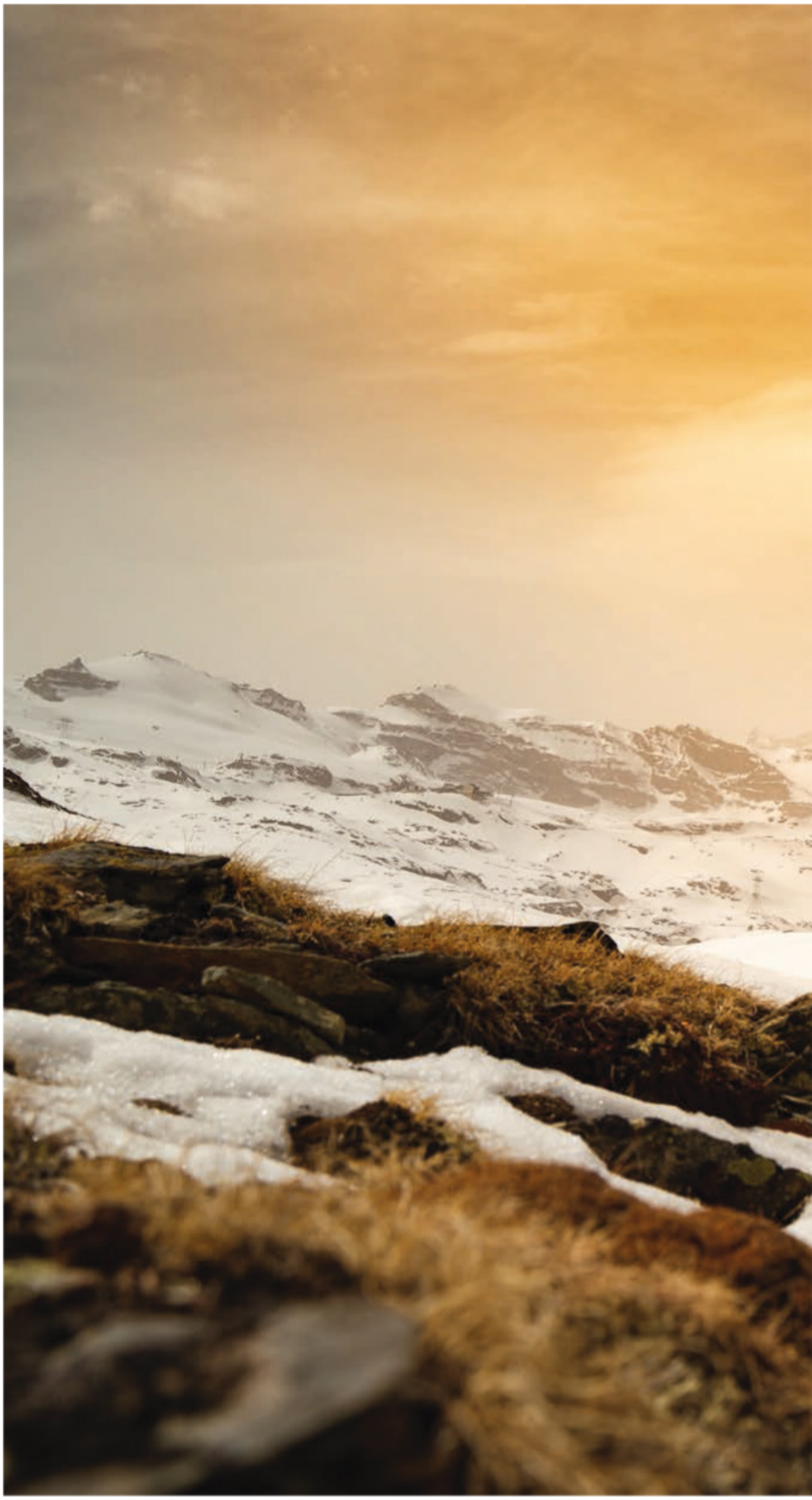
Tranquil View of Matterhorn from Riffelsee
by Riz Ubungen

Sony A7 IV, Sigma Art 24-70mm F2.8 Version 1, 1/250sec at f/5.6, ISO 80

'While snowshoeing solo near the snow-covered Riffelsee in Switzerland, I dropped my poles upon spotting a clearing. Stunned by the breathtaking view, I captured this panorama of Matterhorn, its towering presence set against a serene winter landscape, making the moment unforgettable and filled with pure alpine beauty.'

Instagram and Threads: @rzbngn



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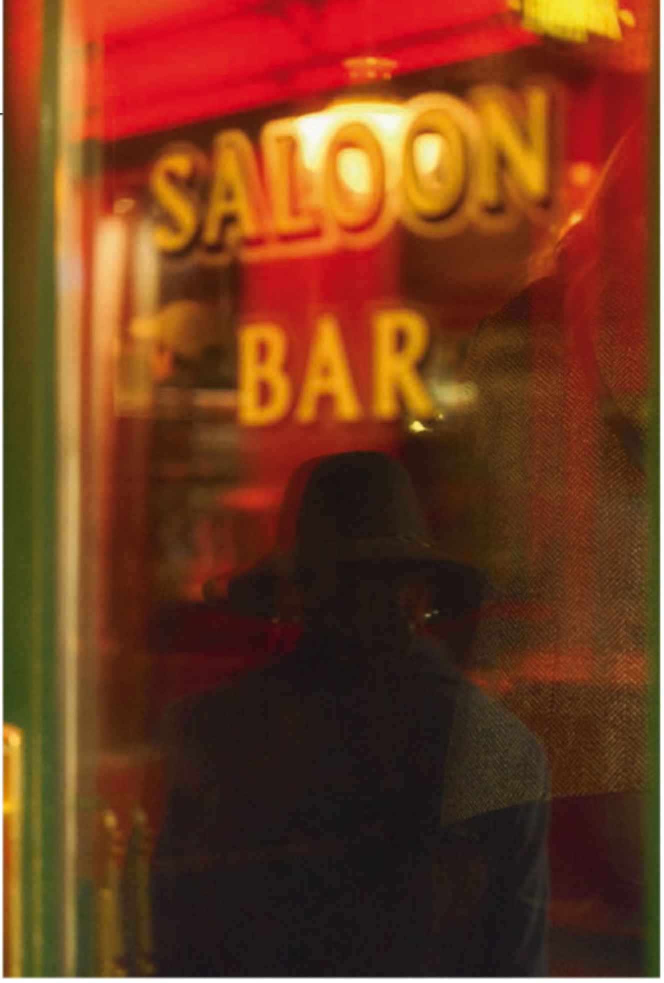
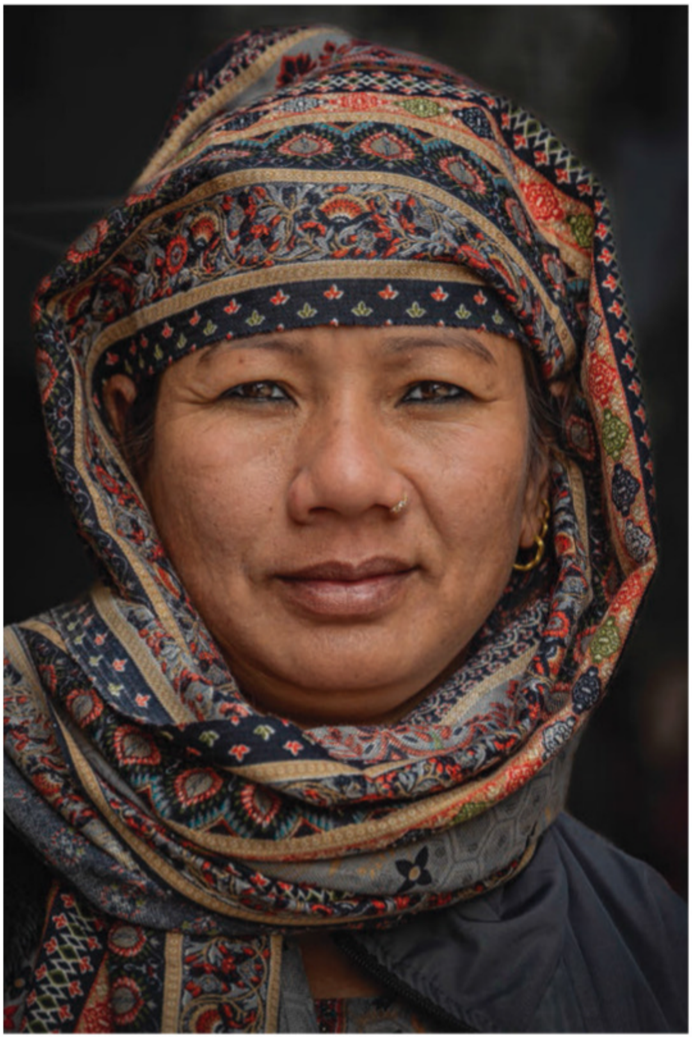


Smoke and Mirrors
by Andreas Ierodiaconou

Fujifilm XT30 II, TTArtisan 56mm F1.8, 1/75sec at f/1.8, ISO 6400

'My photo was taken in vibrant Soho, in the late hours. A woman's distorted reflection captured through a bar window, with her wide-brimmed hat and pearl earrings adding an air of mystery. The prominent 'SALOON BAR' sign completes the composition, evoking feelings of an old Western film.'
Instagram: @andreasirdc



We also liked...

Street Portrait of a Nepalese Woman in Kathmandu
by Virginie Merckaert

Canon EOS R6, Canon EF 24-70mm F2.8 lens with mount adapter, 1/1000sec at f/3.5, ISO 100, @ 70mm

'While walking around the Swayambhunath temple (a.k.a. the monkey temple) in Kathmandu last November I crossed paths with this woman, who immediately caught my eye with her beautiful shawl and allure. I approached her to ask if I could photograph her, to which she luckily agreed. I took this photo, showed her the result and we both went our own way with a smile on our face.'
Instagram: virginie.merckaert.photography

Want to see your pictures here? Simply share them with our Instagram or Facebook communities using the hashtag **#appicoftheweek**. Or you can email your best shot to us at **ap.ed@kelsey.co.uk**. See page 3 for how to find us.

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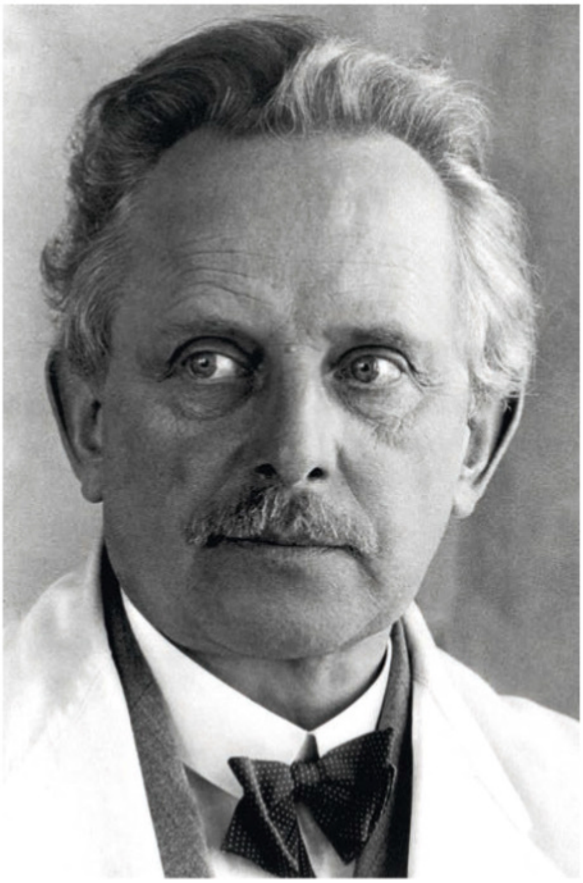
A star is born

John Wade on the early steps that led to the first Leica



PICTURE COURTESY OF LEICA CAMERA AG

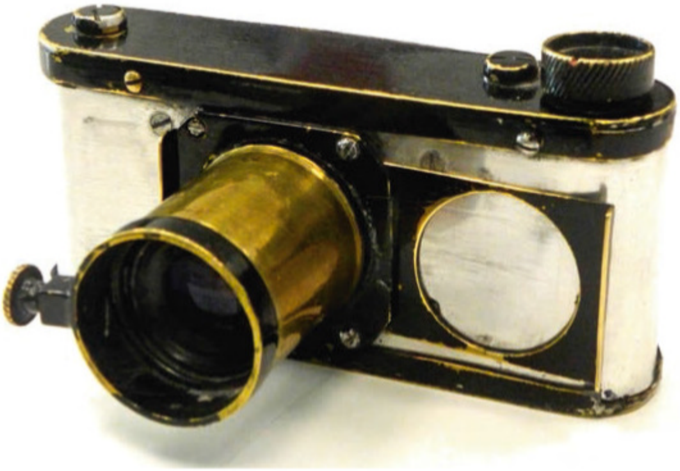
Oskar Barnack, photographer and designer of the first Leica camera

Leipzig Spring Fair, March 1925: an annual trade exposition to showcase all that was great and good in the latest German technical achievements. The exhibits that year included a new type of camera, maybe not considered particularly important at the time, indeed already shunned by some who had seen it, yet destined to change the face of photography. It was of course the Leica, and although 1925 might have been the year of its birth, its conception lay more than a decade in the past.

The story begins with an engineer, inventor and photographer named Oskar Barnack who, aged 32 in 1911, left Zeiss, the renowned lens manufacturer, to join the firm of E. Leitz as Director of Research. Leitz was known for precision optical engineering and microscope production, but one of Barnack's first projects was to work on a high-quality cine camera, for which the standard film gauge was 35mm. One problem he faced concerned film emulsion speeds that varied from batch to batch, making accurate metering difficult. So Barnack designed a small device for testing a short strip of film cut from a much longer length before committing the full length for use in a cine camera.

The M875 film tester

This exposure testing device has become known as the M875, for no reason other than this being the way it was tagged as an exhibit number in the Leica Museum where it was discovered. The device consisted of a metal body that included a mechanism for winding short lengths of film with a rotating knob, a guillotine shutter timed at 1/40sec to approximate the frames-per-second speed of a cine camera's shutter and a metal tube into which a lens could be inserted. It's thought, but not substantiated, that the lens used was possibly a 5cm f/3.5 Tessar borrowed from Barnack's cine camera. A time traveller from the future would have looked at this device and seen, in its shape, the genesis of the Leica, except for a mysterious circular hole under a flap on the back of the body. This might have enabled the apparatus to double as a viewer for examining developed film, the hole allowing light to illuminate negatives from behind as they were viewed by opening the shutter and holding the lens to the eye.



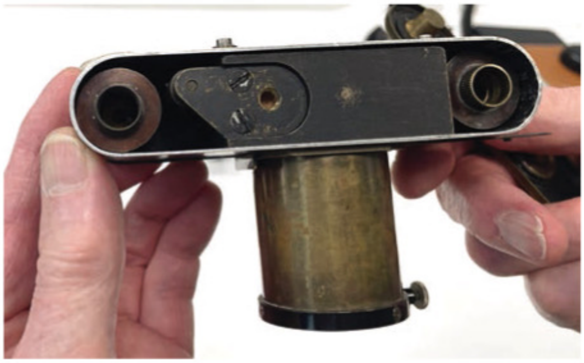
PICTURE COURTESY OF WILLIAM FAGAN

Barnack's exposure tester, resembling the way the Leica would one day look

Much speculation surrounds the M875, including its specific use and how many examples were actually made. What is pretty much certain is that the device was one of the steps which led Barnack, an enthusiastic photographer tired of carrying around large and cumbersome cameras, towards a prototype for a much smaller camera made to use 35mm cine film. He has been quoted as saying, 'I allowed myself to be utterly unconcerned by time-honoured conventions; that is how this new type of camera came into being.'

The Ur-Leica

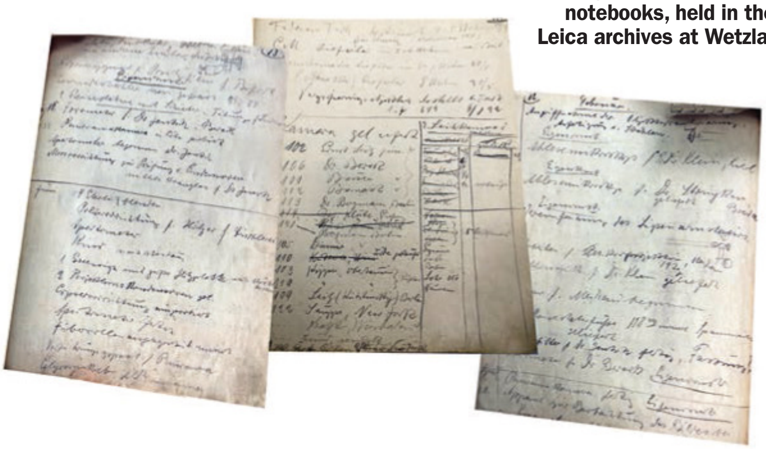
The name 'Leica' had not yet been coined, but Barnack's 1913 prototype has now become known as the Ur-Leica (or Original Leica). It is



PICTURE COURTESY OF WILLIAM FAGAN

The exposure tester with its base open, again reminiscent of the Leica cameras that would follow

Pages from Barnack's notebooks, held in the Leica archives at Wetzlar



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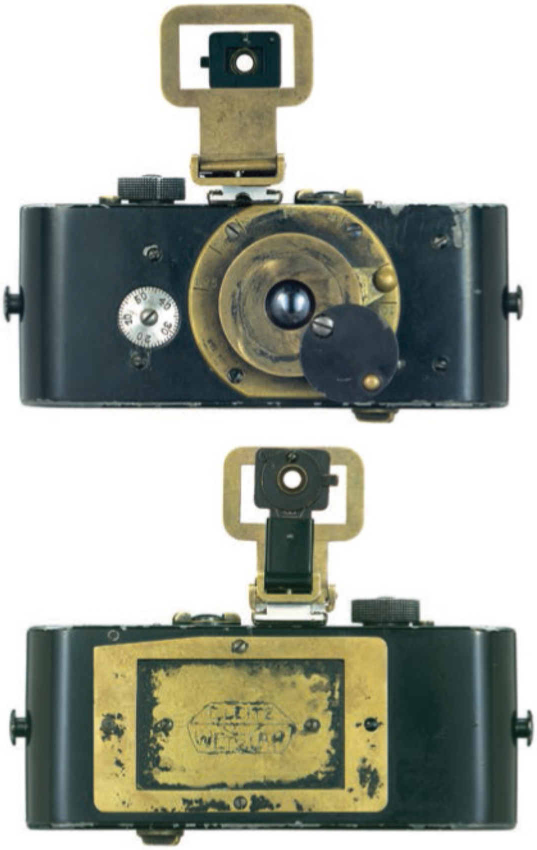

PICTURES COURTESY OF LEICA CAMERA AG

Front and back: The Ur-Leica, Barnack's first prototype

thought that two were built, and rumour has it that there might have been three. Whatever the truth, the fact is that the location of the only one known today is preserved at Leica HQ in Wetzlar.

The Ur-Leica had a metal body with a lens that extended on a telescopic mount and a focal plane shutter tensioned by the film wind knob. Film needed to be loaded in a darkroom and the lens covered whilst winding, since the slit in the shutter curtains remained open as it was wound across the film plane. So a lens cap was permanently attached to swing in place during film winding. A large, metal-framed viewfinder could be attached via an accessory shoe. The shutter release was in the centre of the film wind knob.

Cine film was made to run through cameras and projectors vertically with a frame size of 18x24mm. In contrast, Barnack ran film through his camera horizontally, doubling up on one of the dimensions to initially produce a format of 24x38mm, soon to be adjusted to 24x36mm. So was born the negative size that became the standard for 35mm still photography and remains today in full-frame digital camera sensors. What was possibly the first picture taken with the Ur-Leica was shot by Barnack in 1913, showing shoppers at the Eisenmarkt in Wetzlar. He also later used the prototype camera on walking expeditions in the Black Forest. And then World War I broke out.

The O-Series cameras

When the war ended, Barnack returned to his project and, in

No. 5
No. 6
No. 7
Originalnegative von O. Barnack

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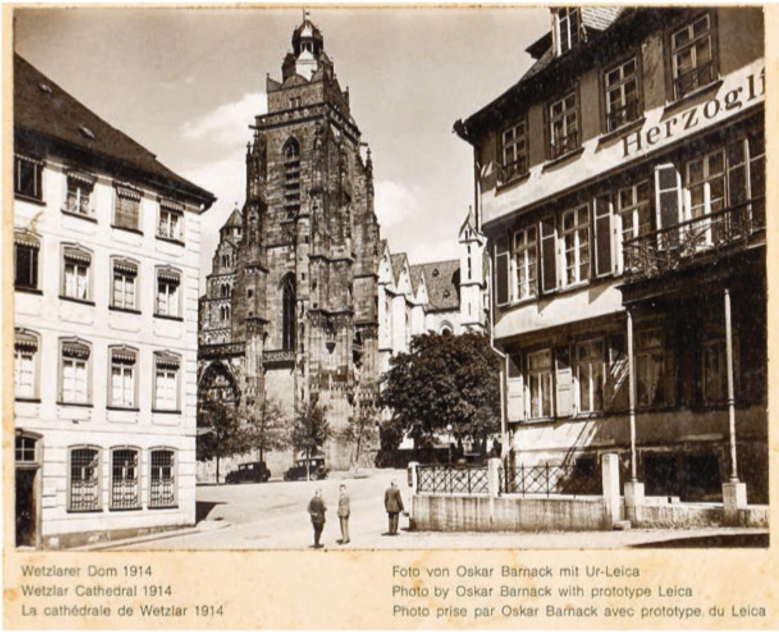
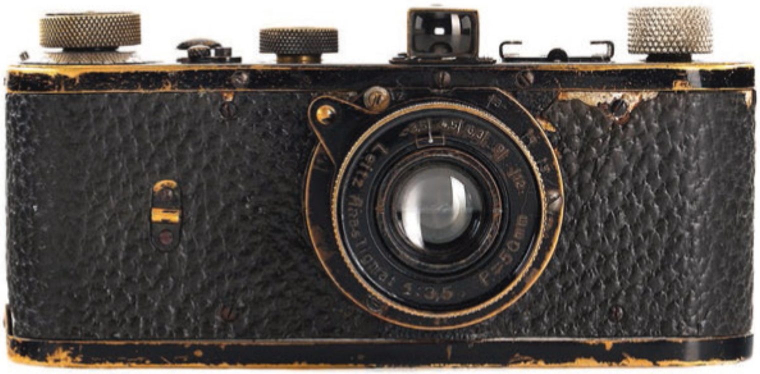
Part of a strip of negatives shot by Barnack using the Ur-Leica


Herzogli
Wetzlarer Dom 1914
Wetzlar Cathedral 1914
La cathédrale de Wetzlar 1914
Foto von Oskar Barnack mit Ur-Leica
Photo by Oskar Barnack with prototype Leica
Photo prise par Oskar Barnack avec prototype du Leica

PICTURE COURTESY OF LEITZ AUCTION, VIENNA

Wetzlar Cathedral, shot by Barnack in 1914 using the Ur-Leica



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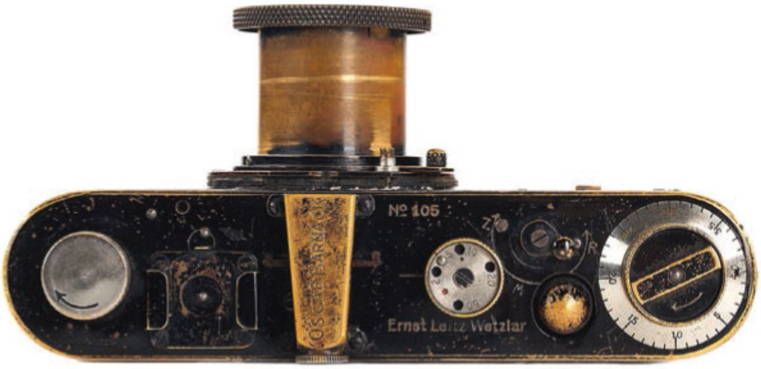
Left: The 0-Series camera, serial number 105, owned by Oskar Barnack



PICTURE COURTESY OF LEITZ AUCTION, VIENNA

Left: Barnack's name, spelt incorrectly, on the top of the viewfinder of serial number 105

1923, he persuaded Ernst Leitz, head of the optical company, to have between 20 and 30 newly-designed cameras hand-made to test reaction from factory employees, professional photographers and scientists. Known today as the 0-Series, these cameras used either a fold-up or an optical Galilean viewfinder and early models still needed the lens to be capped before film winding. On the top plate, the shutter release was moved to what would become the traditional Leica position next to the speed setting dial. Shutter speeds were designated as the width of the slit in the focal plane shutter, from 2 for approximately 1/500sec up to 50 for 1/25sec. The camera used a Leitz 50mm Anastigmat lens. Only a small number of these cameras are now known to have survived, and they fetch high prices at auction.

Of these, Oskar Barnack has been named as the owner of serial number 105, which he used until 1930. His name – spelt 'Oscar' not 'Oskar' – was engraved on the top of the optical viewfinder. When this camera came up for auction in Germany in June 2022, the auctioneer's estimate was €2-3 million. There had been a few doubts expressed about the authenticity of the camera, especially since Barnack's first name in the engraving is not written as the usual German version. However, the anonymous buyer who won the auction bid was obviously convinced by the provenance expounded in a file of information that was part of the lot. Including the buyer's premium (the commission that an auction house adds to the hammer price), the camera sold for €14.4 million.

Back in 1923, the 0-Series models were regarded with less enthusiasm. An opinion expressed by some was that the small format negatives could never deliver the quality from larger roll films and plates. In June 1924 a board meeting, chaired by Ernst Leitz, discussed whether or not to proceed with production. After three hours, no agreement had been reached, the majority being against the idea. At which point, despite the fact that his company had never before made a still camera, and with the time for lunch rapidly approaching, Ernst Leitz is said to have concluded the meeting with the words (in German of course), 'I have made my decision. The time is twelve thirty. We will get started as soon as possible.'

The first Leicas

The earliest name for the new camera was the Leitz Kleinfilmkamera (small film camera). A little later the name Leitz Barnack Camera was considered. Then, using the first two letters from the words 'Leitz Camera', came the Leca. Finally, an 'I' was added from the word 'Leitz' to make the Leica.

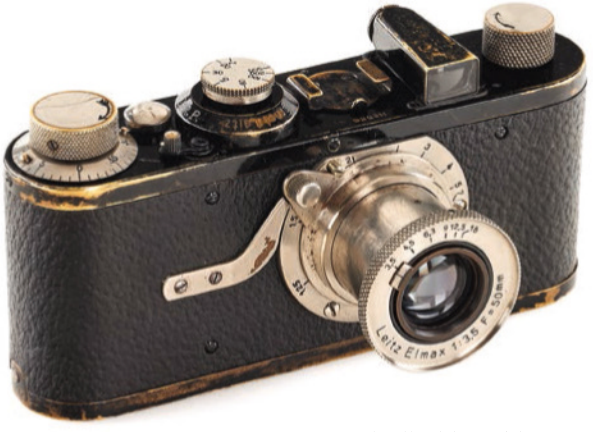
Shutter speeds, from the cloth focal plane shutter that was now self-capping, covered 1/25-1/500sec. The lens pulled out from the body on a small metal tube and pushed back almost flat with the body when not in use. An optical viewfinder was mounted separately on the top plate, and the metal body was covered with vulcanite, often mistaken for leather. The very earliest production cameras were equipped with 50mm f/3.5 Anastigmat lenses designed by Max Berek for the 0-Series cameras, followed by a short run with f/3.5 Elmax lenses before, in 1926, cameras were fitted with f/3.5 Elmar lenses that remained the norm from then on.

That first camera became known as the Model A when, also in 1926, the Model B was launched alongside the Model A. It was made without a shutter in the body but with the Elmar lens mounted in a Compur shutter. This gave the advantage of adding the previously lacking slow speeds. The Compur B models didn't last long and so today are relatively scarce.

Clearly, the use of 35mm film in a stills camera was something of a novelty for those who first encountered it. The *British Journal Photographic Almanac*, reviewing the camera in 1926, referred to it as the Leica Cine Film Camera, and had this to say…

'Quite an innovation in pocket cameras is one just issued by the well-known firm of Leitz, designed to take about five feet of ordinary standard perforated cinematographe film, which is mounted in a special spool, allowing of daylight loading and

Below: A very early Leica I Model A with Elmax lens



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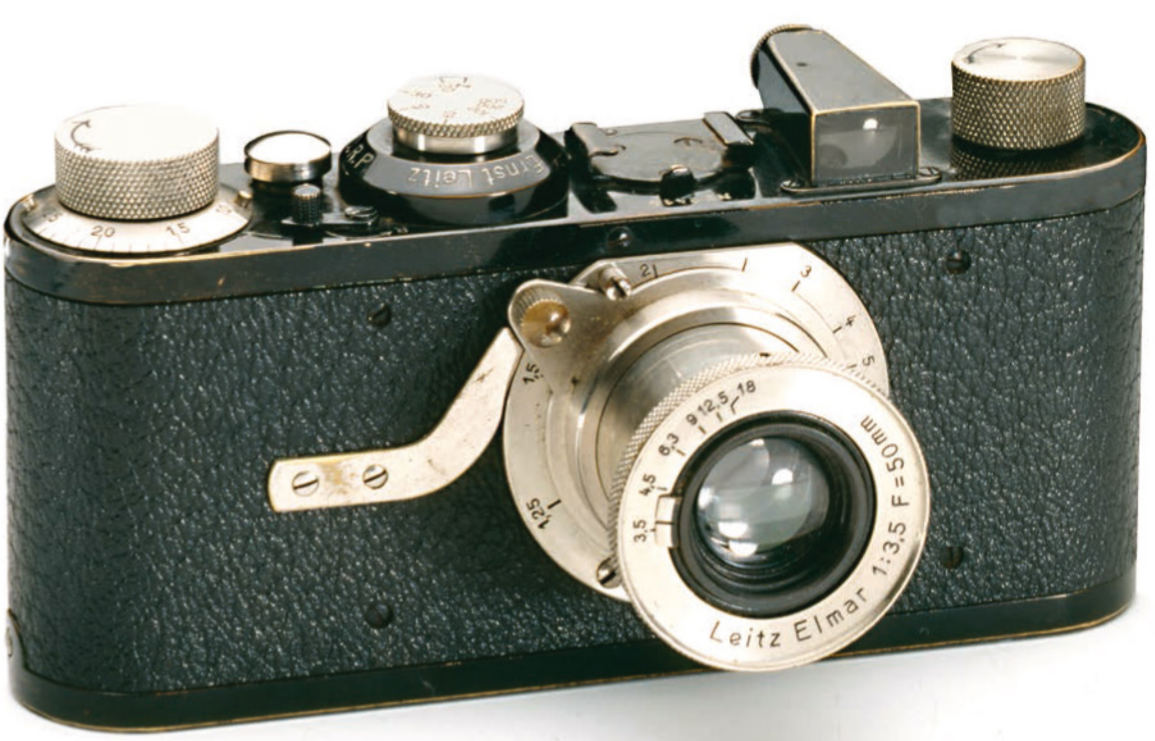


Left: Leica I Model A from 1926 with fixed Elmar lens that superseded the Elmax

unloading. Thirty-six exposures may be made without recharging the camera. The latter of high-class metal construction, measures about 5¼x2¾x1¾ inches and is fitted with a Leitz Elmax lens of 2 inches focal length and f/3.5 aperture, arranged on a focusing mount. In design and workmanship, the camera is of the highest description. The price, inclusive of three film spool carriers, leather bag and carrying strap is £22.'

Until 1930, lenses were fixed, but that year, the Model C introduced interchangeable lenses with a 39mm screw-fit mount. At first these lenses were made to match specific bodies with matching number strings engraved on the lenses which could not be interchanged with other bodies. Soon, however, the lens mount was standardised so that all lenses and bodies became interchangeable. The two types of camera were differentiated by a small '0' engraved on the lens and body mount of the standardised cameras.

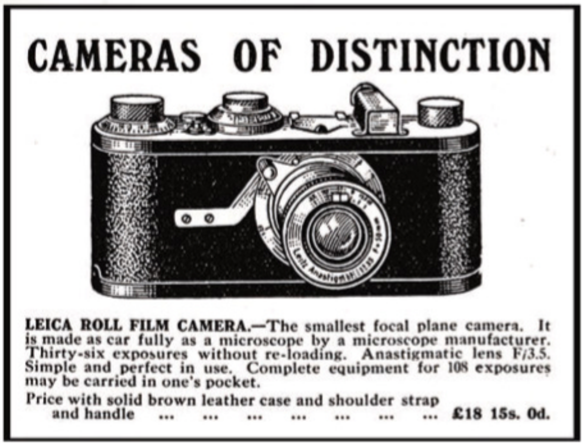
In 1925 Leica cameras commanded just 5% of Leitz company sales. By 1933, the figure had risen to 60%. That day in March 1925 when the Leica was introduced, few could have envisaged how camera design was about to change for ever, and just how much of a legend had just been born.

Acknowledgements

My thanks to friend, fellow collector and Leica Society International Vice President William Fagan for access to his knowledge on all things Leica and for allowing me to use many of his personal pictures of rarely seen items from the Leica archives.

Thanks also to Andreas Schweiger, who handles auction management at Leitz Auction in Vienna, for permission to use pictures from his auction house's past and present catalogues.

Below: Advertisement from London dealer Ogilvy & Co for the Leica Ia which, in 1927, was still being described as having an Anastigmatic lens and priced at £18.15s (£18.75).



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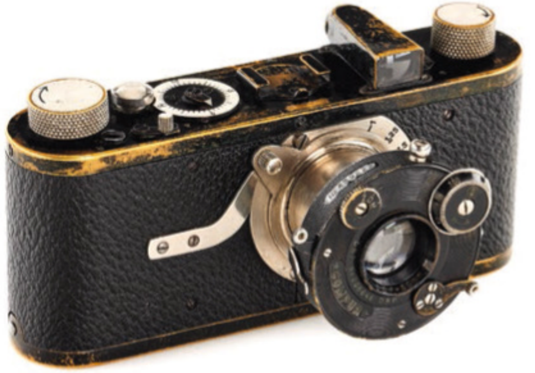

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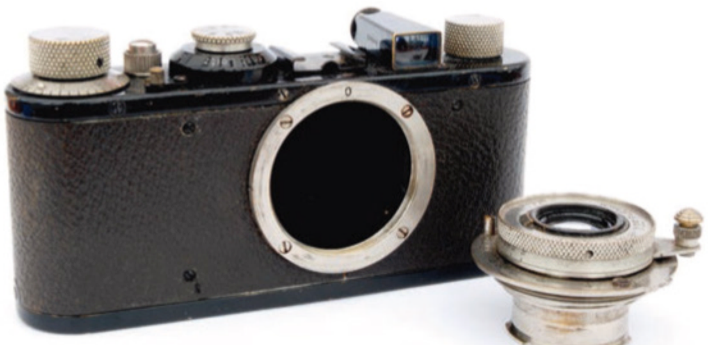
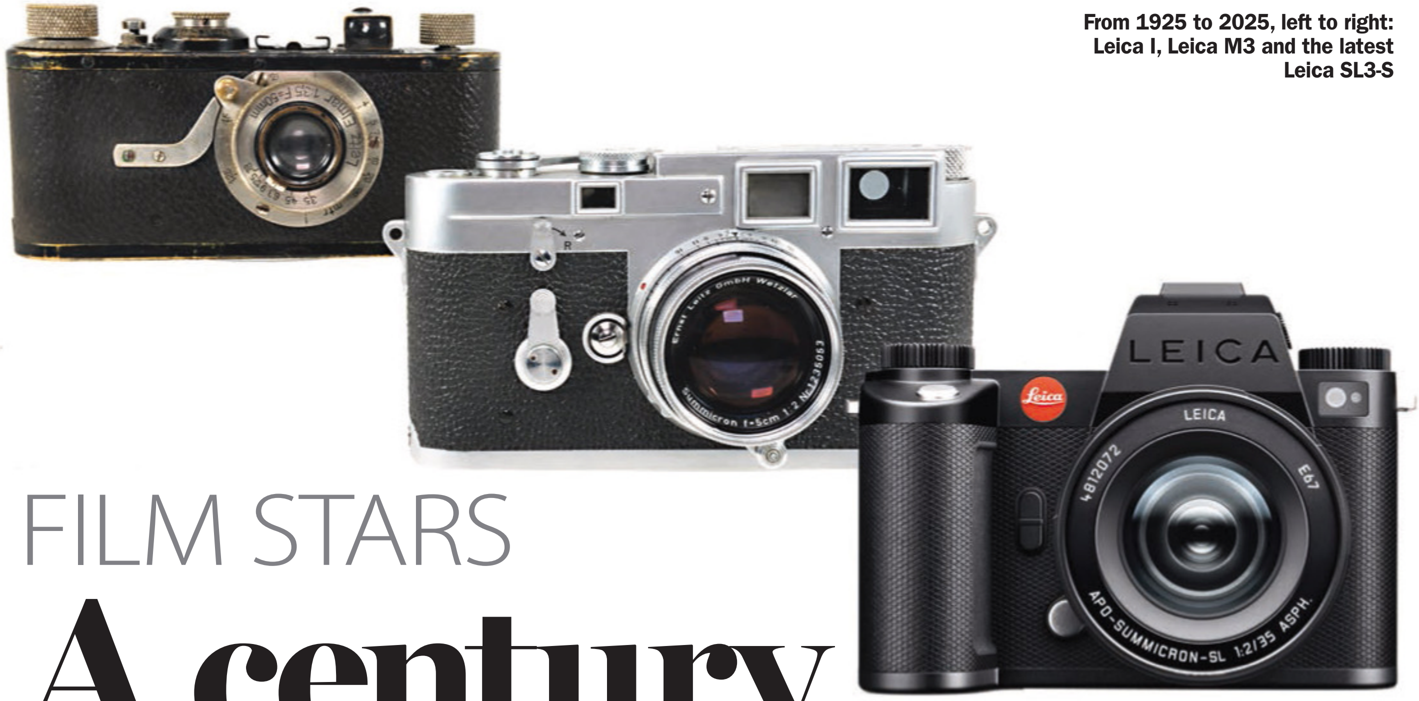
Above: Leica I Model B with Elmar lens mounted in a Dial-Set Compur shutter



Left: How, when interchangeable lenses were standardised on the Model C, the cameras were identified by an '0' engraved on lens and mount



From 1925 to 2025, left to right: Leica I, Leica M3 and the latest Leica SL3-S

FILM STARS

A century of excellence

John Wade traces the Leica story from 1925 to 2025

There is no way that the following six pages can do full justice to the huge numbers of Leica cameras that have been produced during the past 100 years. What we have here, then, is a brief look at some, though by no means all, of the significant cameras – rangefinder, single lens reflex (SLR), compact and digital – that have borne the Leica name during the past century.

From the start, the Leica was designed to stand at the heart of a system of lenses and accessories

PICTURE COURTESY OF LEITZ AUCTION, VIENNA

Leica screw-lens cameras

The first Leicas had fixed lenses, but soon interchangeable-lens models were introduced that used a screw thread with a 39mm diameter and 26 threads-per-inch pitch. This became known as the L39 or Leica Thread Mount (LTM).

1925: Leica I Model A

Introduced with 50mm f/3.5 Anastigmat lens, then Elmax, followed by Elmar fixed lenses. Eye-level viewfinder separately mounted on top plate. Followed by the Model B with Compur shutter in 1926 and Model C with interchangeable lenses in 1930.

1929: Leica Luxus

Rare version of the Model A with a lizard skin covered body and gold-plated metal parts.

1932: Leica II Model D

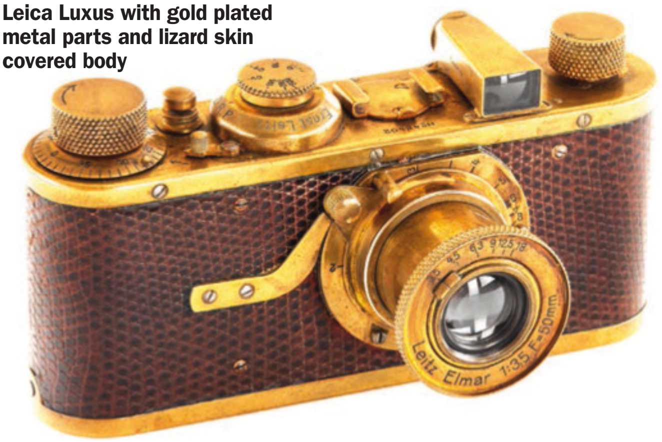
First Leica to incorporate a rangefinder automatically coupled to lenses from 35mm to 135mm. Rangefinder and viewfinder incorporated into new top cover with separate eyepieces.

1933: Leica III Model F

Slow speeds added down to 1sec using a separate rotating knob beside the lens. Diopter adjustment in viewfinder. Top speed increased from 1/500sec to 1/1,000sec with IIIa in 1935.

1935: Leica IV

Existing today only as a single prototype, the



Leica Luxus with gold plated metal parts and lizard skin covered body

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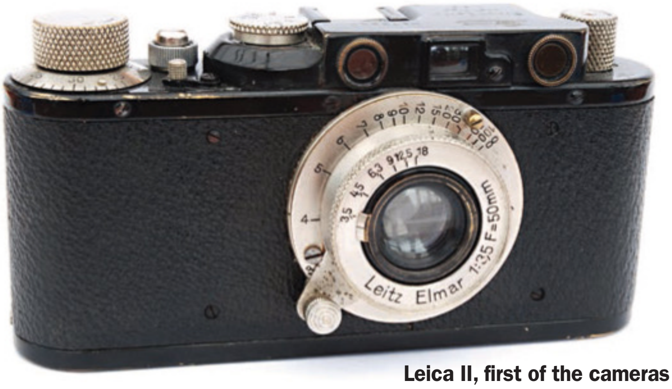
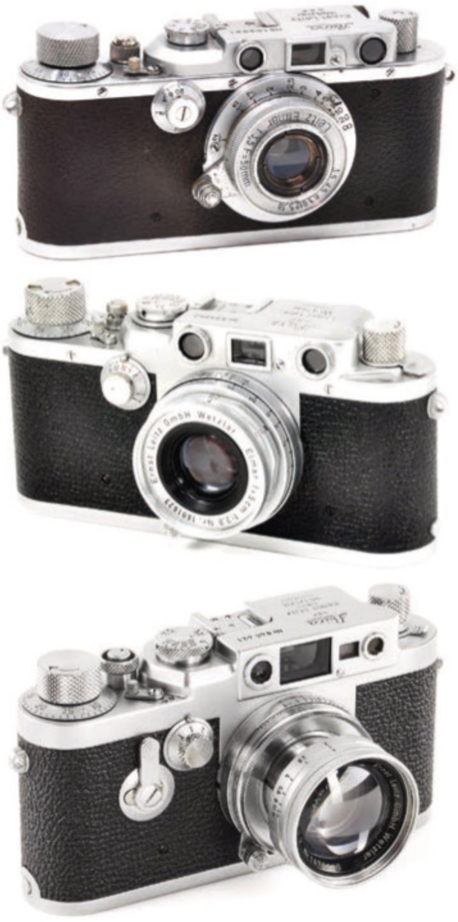


Leica II, first of the cameras with a coupled rangefinder



Three landmarks in the III series, top to bottom: Leica IIIa, IIIf and IIIg

Leica IV looks like a cross between the screw lens cameras and the M cameras yet to come. Combined viewfinder and long-base rangefinder interchangeable for different focal lengths, L39 screw mount built into a new housing.

1938: Leica IIIb

Rangefinder and viewfinder eyepieces placed closer together for easier use. Made in a new diecast frame body as the Leica IIIc in 1940.

1950: Leica 72

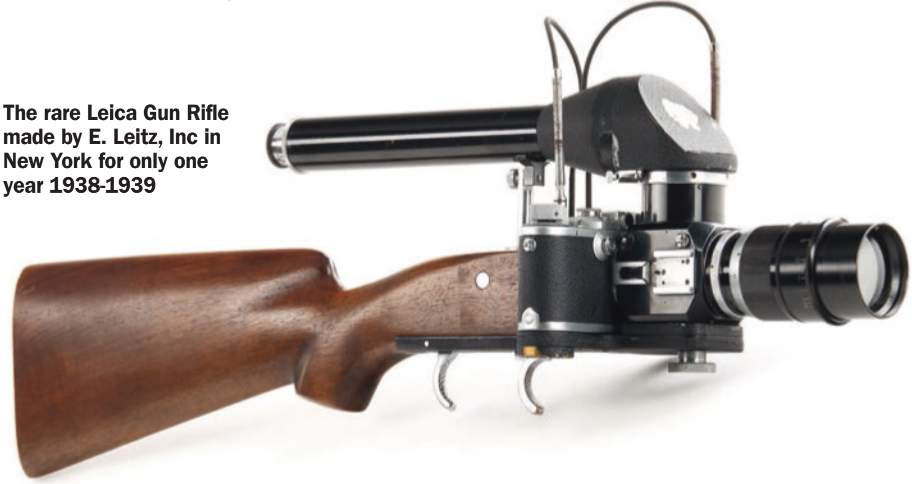
Built by Ernst Leitz Canada and based on a Leica IIIa, to shoot 72 18x24mm exposures on 36-exposure 35mm film.

1950: Leica IIIf

Similar to the IIIc but with flash sync added via a socket in the back next to the viewfinder. Synchronisation available at all shutter speeds, achieved by setting a number between 0 and 20 on a scale beneath the shutter speed dial. The number varied according to the type of flashbulb or electronic flash and the shutter speed set, as detailed in the instruction book. In early cameras, the dial is engraved in black. In 1952, when the shutter was improved with a more modern configuration of speeds, the engraving was changed to red. Hence IIIf cameras are described as 'black dial' or 'red dial' models.

1956: Leica IIIg

Improvements over previous models include a larger viewfinder with half-size image and bright frames for 50mm and 90mm lenses that move with focusing to compensate for parallax. Delayed action added. Shutter speeds of 1-1/1,000sec, still operated by two dials, now configured in geometric progression – i.e. 1/30, 1/60, 1/125, 1/250... etc.



The rare Leica Gun Rifle made by E. Leitz, Inc in New York for only one year 1938-1939

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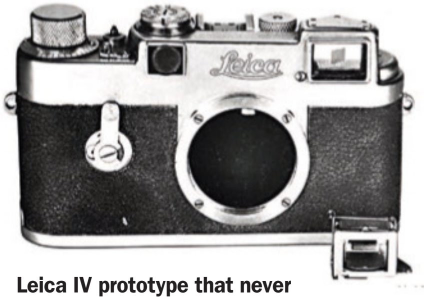

Leica IV prototype that never went into production

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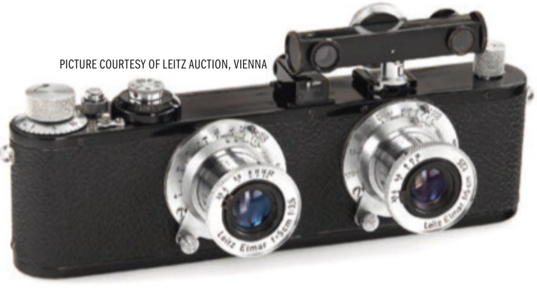

The Leica Dopel, a prototype stereo camera built by Oskar Barnack c.1935

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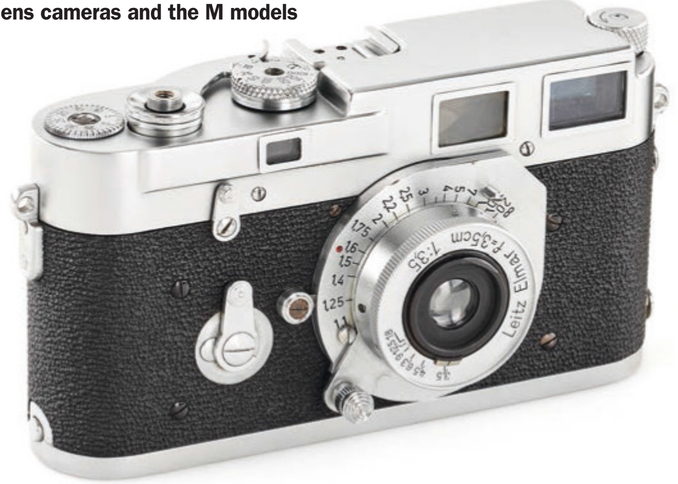
One of the earliest known Leica M prototypes that marks a pivotal moment between the screw lens cameras and the M models



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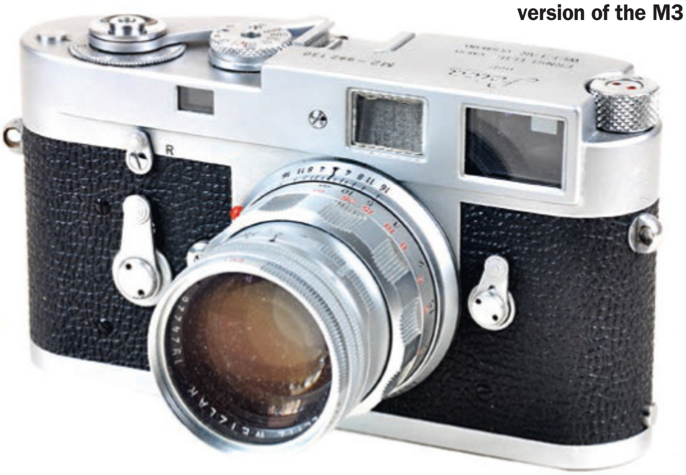
Leica M2, a stripped-down version of the M3



Leica M cameras

Leica's M-series of cameras represented a total rethink in style and design. The screw mount was replaced by the M-mount bayonet fitting, rangefinder and viewfinder were combined into a single unit.

1948: M3 prototype

Early prototypes were similar to the upcoming M3, but with no serial number or engravings, slightly shorter body length, different strap lugs, uniquely styled film wind lever and a flat style for frames surrounding viewfinder and rangefinder windows.

1954: Leica M3

First production model. New longer base rangefinder for more accurate focusing, shutter speed setting confined to a single dial, delayed action fitted. The viewfinder gives a 90% life-size image and contains parallax corrected bright frames which appear automatically as 50mm, 90mm or 135mm lenses are fitted. Film loading made easier by the addition of a door in the back. Mostly made with chrome bodies, but a small number made in black. Early models used a double stroke for the film wind lever, later standardised to single stroke.

1956: Leica MP

Similar to the M3 but made for the professional market. Two-stroke film wind, no delayed action and equipped with a Leicavit MP rapid wind base, allowing the film to be rapidly advanced by a trigger-like lever.

1958: Leica M2

Slightly stripped-down version of the M3 without automatic frame counter reset. Viewfinder bright frames automatically change for 35mm, 50mm and 90mm lenses.

1967: Leica M4

Slanted rewind crank for easier use, improved film loading and automatically adjusted viewfinder bright frames for 35mm, 50mm, 90mm and 135mm lenses.

1971: Leica M5

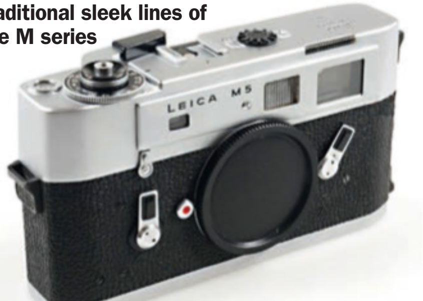
New bulkier and heavier body to allow for the incorporation of a through-the-lens (TTL), match-needle metering system. A cell on a moving arm swings up behind the lens in front of the shutter curtains as the film is advanced to fall away again prior to exposure.

1973: Leica CL

Taking the metering system of the M5 and packing it into a much smaller body, designed by Leitz in collaboration with, and built by, Minolta. Two Leica lenses were made specially for the camera: a 40mm f/2 Summicron-C and 90mm f/4 Elmar-C. Accepts most other M-series lenses, though super-wideangle lenses whose

Leica MP cameras stand on a page from Leitz sales ledgers in which hand-written details of every camera and its destination were listed

The M5 departed from the traditional sleek lines of the M series



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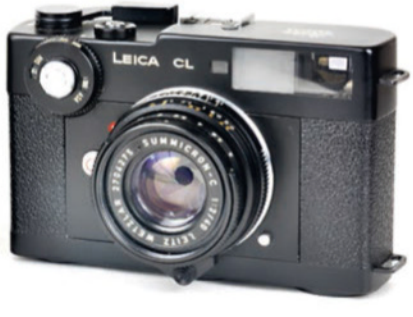
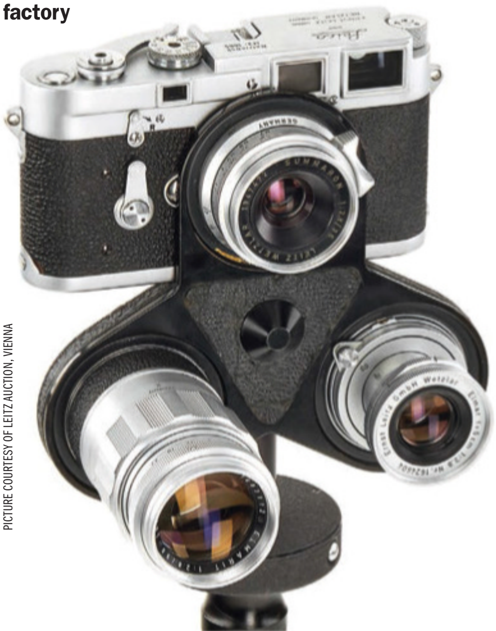
Leica CL: designed by Leitz, built by Minolta



Leica M3 Betriebskamera with a three-lens turret, made for internal use in the Leitz factory



PICTURE COURTESY OF LEITZ AUCTION, VIENNA rear elements extend back into the body must be avoided for fear of damaging the moving metering arm.

1980: Leica M4-P

Similar to the M4, but with bright frames added in the viewfinder for 28mm and 75mm lenses. Motor drive facility.

1984: Leica M6

Rejecting the bulkiness of the M5, the M6 returned to the size and shape of the M3 with the technical spec of the M4-P. Electronic TTL metering with LED confirmation in the viewfinder. Full range of mechanical speeds. Originally made in black, with variations including chrome and grey titanium finish. Many special editions were produced for special occasions. Re-introduced in 2022.

2002: Leica M7

Similar to the M6, with 0.58, 0.72 and 0.85 viewfinder magnification versions. First M film camera with aperture priority exposure. Special solid titanium edition available in a kit with titanium-coloured lenses.

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Leica made many limited editions. This M6 was made to celebrate the ascension to the throne of the Sultan of Brunei

Leicaflex 1 single lens reflex

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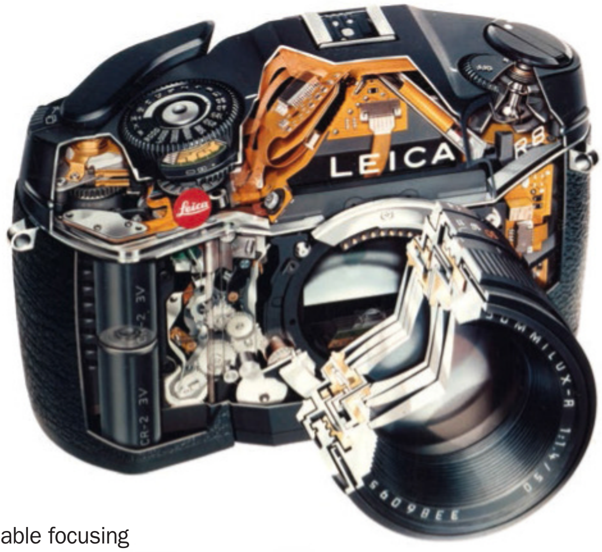

Above: Cutaway of the R8 which represented a new design for Leica SLRs

Leica SLR cameras

Confident of its position in the market with some of the best rangefinder cameras, it was 1964 before the first Leica SLR arrived to run side-by-side with the rangefinder film cameras that still had another three decades of development ahead.

1964: Leicaflex

CdS cell in window above the lens to give match-needle metering in the viewfinder. New bayonet lens mount introduced a new range of lenses, although older Leica lenses can be used with an adapter. Top shutter speed of 1/2,000sec. Fixed pentaprism viewfinder. In 1968, the Leicaflex SL added TTL metering, and in 1974 the SL2 increased meter sensitivity with an improved viewfinder display and film loading.

1976: Leica R3

Leica SLRs were revamped with the first R-series camera, made in co-operation with Minolta. Vertically-moving, metal electronic shutter, aperture priority exposure, TTL spot or centre-weighted metering.

1980: Leica R4

Setting the size, shape and layout of Leica reflex cameras for the following 16 years. Five exposure modes, interchangeable focusing screens, exposure compensation, mechanical operation at 1/100sec, five frames per second motor drive and hot shoe flash contacts. The R4S in 1983 was similar but with a simplified shutter. The R5 in 1987 added TTL flash exposure and shutter speeds down to 12sec. The R6 in 1988 was manual with a mechanical shutter. The R7 in 1992 upgraded the TTL flash control, adding DX coding and increased meter sensitivity.

1996: Leica R8

Complete rethink, both technically and in its more rounded body design. Improvements include extra contacts in the lens mount to exchange digitally-based information between the body and lens, stepless shutter, high eye-point viewfinder and multi-field metering. The R9 in 2002 added an illuminated back cover display, multi-pattern metering measured in tenths of an f-stop and flash sync with Leica's High Speed Synchronisation flashguns up to 1/8,000sec.
In 2004, the Digital Modul-R back for the R8 and R9 converted them to 10MP digital SLRs.

Leicaflex SL2 and R3 Electronic cameras

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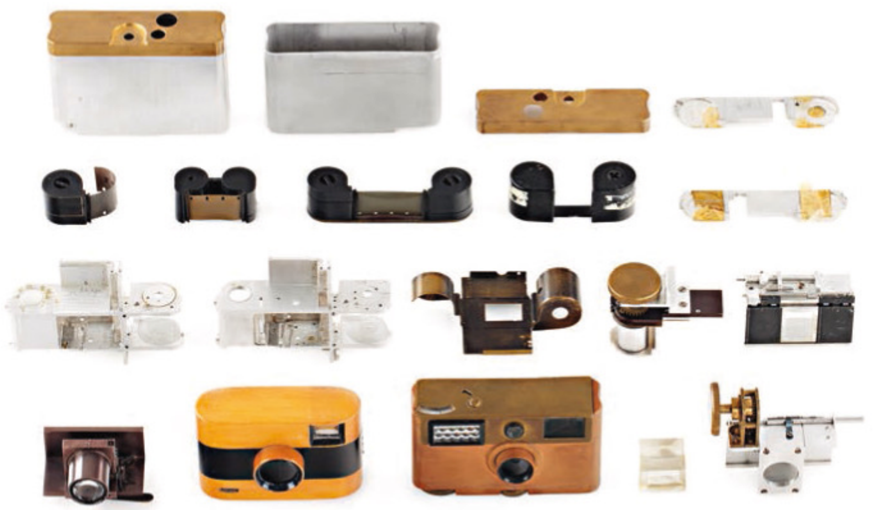

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Some of the parts and prototypes that have survived from the Leitz 16mm project

Leica compact and subminiature cameras

Following the success of the M3, Leitz considered making a 16mm subminiature camera, but development was cancelled after only one complete camera had been produced. Instead, the company turned to 35mm compacts. The 1950s saw two compact prototypes, both half-frame models. The Leica Box was the first and featured interchangeable lenses; the second was the Leica H with a retractable lens and built-in meter. In 1974, a 110 camera was considered and rejected. It was more than a decade before the first compact appeared.

1989: Leica AF-C1

Leica's first autofocus compact with a built-in 2x teleconverter to provide focal lengths of 40mm and 80mm. LEDs confirm focus and suggest when flash should be used.
A built-in LCD panel is used to display other camera functions.

1991: Leica C2-Zoom

Leica's first zoom compact with a 40-90mm f/3.5-7.7 lens. When needed, default programme automatically zooms lens and selects exposure for full-length portraits.

1991: Leica Mini

Ultra-compact design with autofocus 35mm f/3.5 lens, auto exposure and flash control. Exposure compensation, red-eye reduction and continuous shooting came with the Mini II in 1993. The Mini 3 in 1996 featured a 32mm f/3.2 lens. Finished in black with titanium front panel.

1993: Leica Mini Zoom

Vario Elmar 35-70mm f/4-7.6 autofocus lens, programmed metering, auto flash, automatic film loading, motorised film wind and rewind. In 1997, the Leica 72X was similar to the Mini Zoom, but added a databack.

1995: Minilux

Twice the cost of other Leica compacts and confined to luxuriously-finished special editions in titanium with leather hand grip areas. Featuring a 40mm f/2.4 autofocus lens with manual override, bright line viewfinder, automatic film loading, wind and rewind. A new 35-70mm f/3.5-6.5 zoom lens was added with the Minilux Zoom in 1998.

PICTURE COURTESY OF FLINTS AUCTIONS

The stylish Leica Minilux compact camera

2000: Leica C1

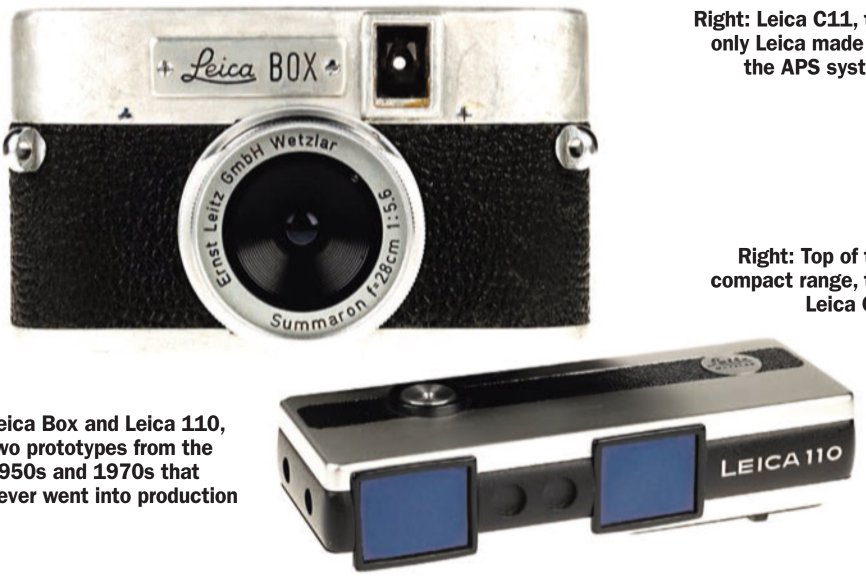
First of a new series of designs with more rounded ends to its aluminium body. Automatic program exposure and flash activation, autofocus 38-105mm f/4-10.5 lens, red-eye reduction. In 2002, the C2 added a 35-70mm f/4.6-8.6 lens, and the C3 added a 28-80mm f/3.6-7.9 lens.

2000: Leica C11

The only Leica made for the Advanced Photo System (APS). New design incorporating a hand grip, 23-70mm f/4.8-9.5 lens, active infra-red autofocus, auto flash activation and auto exposure with AE lock.

2003: Leica CM

Most versatile of all the compacts, incorporating technology from the Leica M7. Titanium body, autofocus 40mm f/2.4 lens, aperture priority and programmed exposure, automatic flash activation, all with a high degree of manual override.



PICTURE COURTESY OF ARCHIVE LEICA CAMERA AG

Leica Box and Leica 110, two prototypes from the 1950s and 1970s that never went into production

PICTURE COURTESY OF DAVID GARDNER

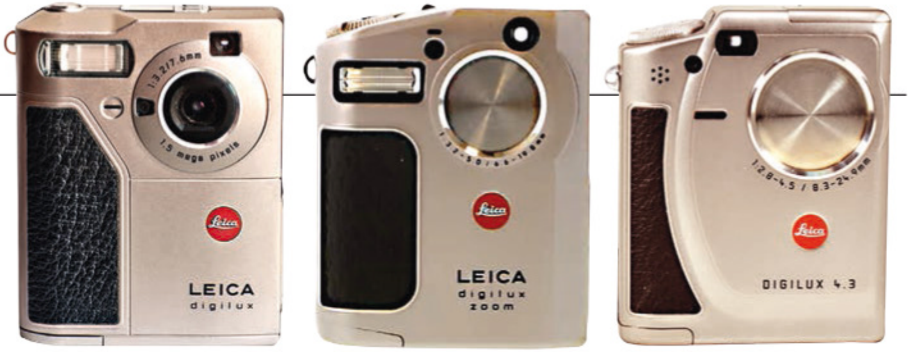
Right: Leica C11, the only Leica made for the APS system

PICTURE COURTESY OF CHISWICK AUCTIONS

Right: Top of the compact range, the Leica CM

PICTURE COURTESY OF LEITZ AUCTION, VIENNA

Leica S1, the company's first digital camera



The first three FujifFilm-made cameras, left to right: Digilux, Digilux Zoom and Digilux 4.3

Leica digital cameras

Leica's first digital model was the S1, not so much a camera, more a scanner with a lens. It accepted most Leica M and R lenses, and was aimed at still-life photographers, studio work and archival documentation. These cameras were phased out in 2003.

1998-2000: Digilux cameras

Made by FujiFilm and badged by Leica who also added internal digital and external cosmetic changes, the original Digilux featured an unusual vertically styled body with a 0.5in 1.5MP sensor and 7.6mm f/3.2 lens. In 1999 the Digilux Zoom added a 6.6-19.8mm zoom lens. The Digilux 4.3 in 2000 was slightly restyled, with a 2.4MP sensor and 8.3-24.9mm lens.

2002-2006: Digilux 1, 2 and 3

Leica's first collaboration with Panasonic resulted in three very different Digilux models. The design of the Digilux 1 from 2002 hints at a classic Leica rangefinder camera. Optical glass viewfinder linked to the 7-21mm f/2-2.5 Vario Summicron lens, 4MP sensor. The following year, the Digilux 2 looked like a Leica M3 transformed into an SLR. Fixed 7-22.5mm lens and electronic viewfinder, plus traditional film camera-like controls for shutter speed, aperture, focusing and zoom.

Finally the Digilux 3, from 2006, is a true DSLR with interchangeable lenses and a reflex viewfinder that works via four mirrors rather than a pentaprism. This was Leica's only foray into the Four Thirds system, meaning it accepts not just Leica lenses, but also a comprehensive range from Olympus. Direct and bounce options offered with the built-in flashguns on both the Digilux 2 and 3.

2006 - present: Leica M series

Continuing with the iconic shape, style, form and function of the M-series film cameras, complete with coupled rangefinder and manual focus lenses, the M8 took on board a 10MP 27x18mm CCD sensor (only slightly larger than the 35mm half-frame format). Although launched with a Tri Elmar M 16-18-21mm f/4, lens the camera also accepts lenses from the M-series film cameras. The M8 was followed by many M cameras, including the M9 with a full-frame sensor, the M Monochrom for black & white imaging, and the slimmed-down M10 and M11. The M digital cameras are the current flagship models of the Leica range and show a heritage not just from the Leica M3 of 1954, but also reaching back to the first Leica in 1925.

2006: Leica C-Lux 1

Stylishly designed compact camera with 8.8-132mm lens, 20MP 1in sensor and continuous shooting at ten frames per second. Three updates followed.

2006: Leica V-Lux 1

Based on the Panasonic DMC-FZ50, this SLR-shaped bridge camera has a built-in 35-420mm equivalent f/2.8-3.7 lens. Followed by eight upgrades.

2014 - present: Leica D-Lux series

Range of pocket compact cameras with zoom lenses, developed from the Panasonic Lumix LX series. The current model, the D-Lux 8, was introduced last year.

PICTURE COURTESY OF MW CLASSIC CAMERAS

Leica V-Lux 1, a compact with the advantages of an SLR

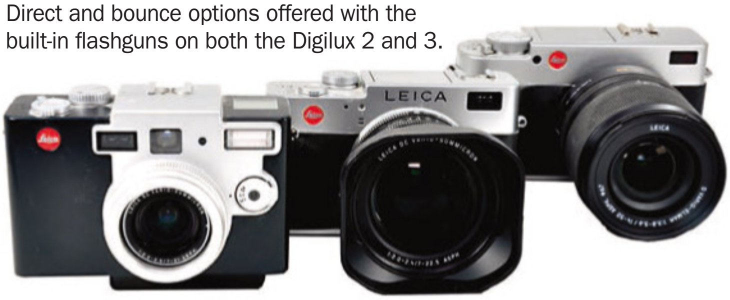
2015 - present: Leica Q series

Relatively compact Leica fixed-lens camera with full-frame sensor ranging from 24MP in the Q to 60MP in the Q3. The lens was originally a 28mm f/1.7 Summilux, but a 43mm f/2 Summicron APO lens was added as an option in 2024. Proven to be extremely popular with traditional Leica users.

2015 - present: Leica SL series

After the R9 film SLR, plans were afoot to produce the R10 as a digital model. It never happened. Instead the SL arrived, a high-end 24MP full-frame mirrorless camera. Now, in 2025, this line is in its third generation, with the SL3-S being Leica's latest camera.

Back in 1925, it's doubtful that even the collective forward thinking of Oskar Barnack and Ernst Leitz combined could have begun to envisage how their humble little camera would metamorphose into anything like the Leica digital cameras now available 100 years later.



Left to right: three different styles for the Digilux 1, 2 and 3

PICTURE COURTESY OF PARK CAMERAS

Leica SL: full frame, mirrorless and with a 24MP sensor

Acknowledgements: Grateful thanks to all those who allowed my use of their pictures for this article. Their names are credited with their pictures. Uncredited illustrations are from my own collection and picture library. Thanks also to Leica aficionado William Fagan for checking my words, approving what I got right, adding what I missed out and gently indicating what I got wrong.

Tribute brands

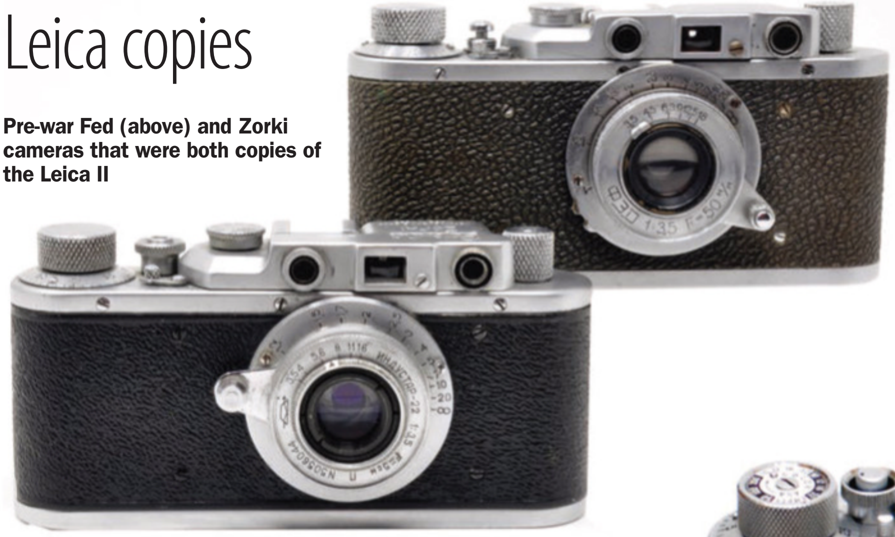
John Wade takes a look at Leica look-alikes

It's a tribute to Leica that the brand influenced so many other manufacturers. When the first cameras were produced, Leitz failed to register patents in Russia or China, thus the Russians began making Leica copies in the 1930s.

With the end of World War II in 1945, governments of countries where German patents had been registered made those patents available free of charge. Consequently, post-war, camera manufacturers began making their own versions of Leica cameras in countries that included America, China, England, France, Germany, Italy, Japan and Russia.

It's impossible to list all the cameras that copied, or were inspired by, the Leica. So here are just a few notable examples...

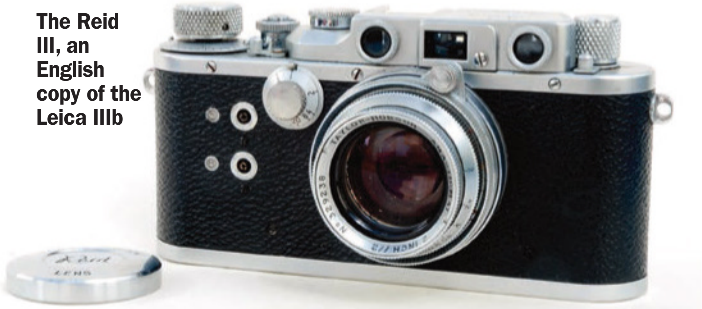
Leica copies



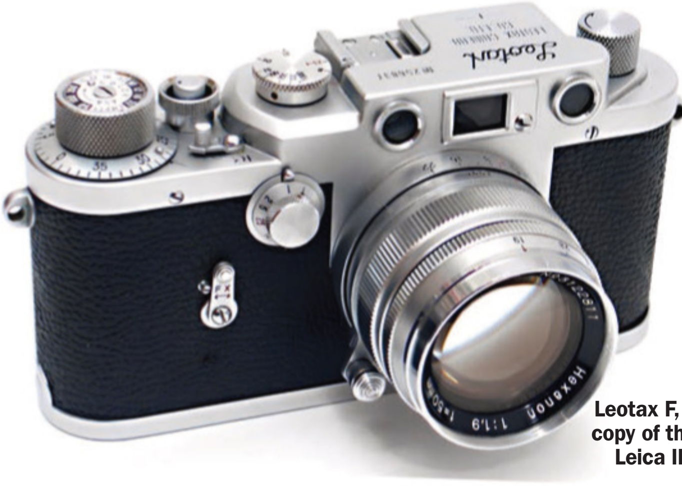
Pre-war Fed (above) and Zorki cameras that were both copies of the Leica II

Fed 1/Zorki 1

The Russian Fed 1, made by a company of the same name in Ukraine, appeared in 1934 two years after the Leica II on which it was based. Externally the two cameras are very similar, right down to the Fed 50mm f/3.5 collapsible lens, resembling Leica's Elmar. The Zorki 1,made by Krasnogorsk in 1950, was a derivative of the Fed 1, making it another Leica II copy. There were many variations of both cameras.



The Reid III, an English copy of the Leica IIIb



Leotax F, a copy of the Leica IIIf

PICTURE COURTESY OF WWW.PETERLOY.COM

Reid III

Made by Reid and Sigrist in Leicestershire in 1947, the original Reid is a copy of the Leica IIIb with a Taylor Hobson 50mm f/2 lens. Like the Leica, slow speeds from 1/20sec down are adjusted by a separate knob on front of the body. In 1958, this was removed to produce the Reid II, at which point the original camera became known as the Reid III. The same year, the Reid I was a copy of the Leica Standard, itself a variation of the Leica I.

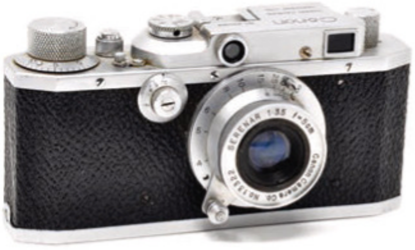
Leotax F

From the Showa Optical Works in Japan came a range of nearly 20 Leotax Leica copy cameras. The Leotax F is a copy of the Leica IIIf, one of the best of the Leica screw-lens cameras. Shutter speeds run 1-1/1,000sec using the traditional Leica twin controls for fast and slow speeds. Standard lenses, in the 39m mount, are the Topcor 50mm f/3.5, f/2.8. f/2 and f/1.5.

Leica copy names to watch for

Alta, Bower, Canon, Chiyoca, Chang Chiang, Da Lai, Director, Effebi, Elega, Faf, Fed, Fiumea, Foca, Gamma, Honor, Janua, Jeicy, Kardon, Kristall, Leotax, Melcon, Minolta, Mulley, Nanjing, Neuca, Nicca, Periflex, Perseo, Photochrom, Pioneer, Recta, Red Flag, Reid, Sagem, Shanghai, Sonne, Tanack, Tower, Wega, Yashica, Zarya, Zorki.

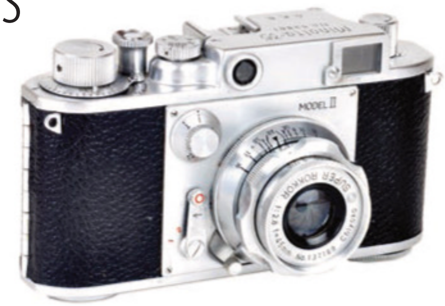
Leica-inspired cameras



Canon S-II, showing definite influences from the Leica III

Canon S-II

Early Canons were not exactly Leica copies, but their designs were obviously inspired by Leica. The S-II, made in 1947, strongly resembles the Leica III. The Serenar 5cm f/3.5 lens is similar to Leica's Elmar f/3.5 with the same 39mm screw fitting. The Leica-like body uses separate dials for fast and slow shutter speeds. Corners of the body, rounded on the Leica, are chamfered on the Canon. The viewfinder and rangefinder are contained in a single eyepiece, rather than Leica's method of separating them into two.

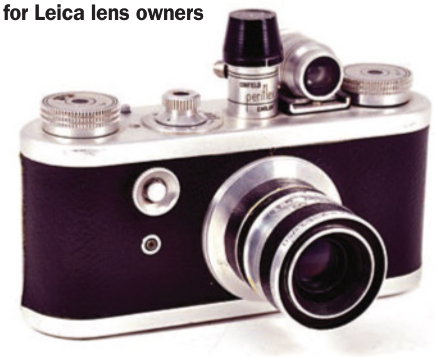


Model II version of the Minolta-35

Minolta-35 Model II

Minolta's early 35mm cameras were not direct copies of the Leica, but the German camera's influence is definitely seen in the body style and the Leica 39mm screw-fit lens. Early Minolta-35 cameras used a 24x32mm film format, but the Model II, made in 1953, changed to the traditional 24x36mm. Leica-like twin dials are used for slow and fast shutter speeds. The rangefinder shares its eyepiece with the viewfinder.

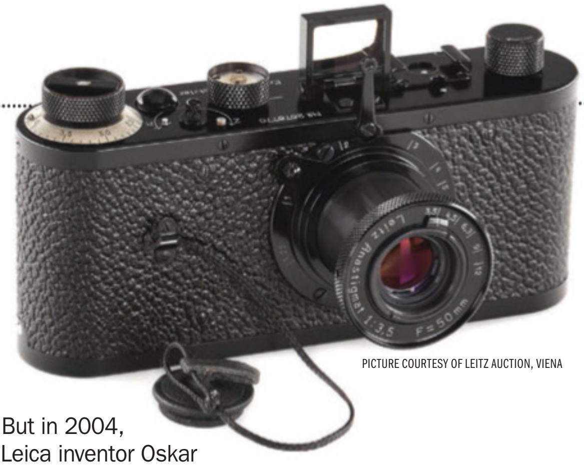
Periflex 1, initially planned as an extra body for Leica lens owners



Periflex 1

In the early 1950s, Board of Trade restrictions following World War II restricted Leicas from being imported into Britain. So the British Corfield company produced a camera body with a shutter and the Leica 39mm mount. The plan was that photographers who still had Leica lenses from pre-war could purchase an inexpensive extra body for them. Having built it, Corfield decided to add a viewing device which, side-by-side with a normal eye-level viewfinder, took the form of a small periscope manually pushed down into the film plane to magnify part of the image. Then they added a Lumar 50mm f/3.5 lens. It sounds like a clumsy idea, but the concept was improved upon continually until 1961.

Leica replicas

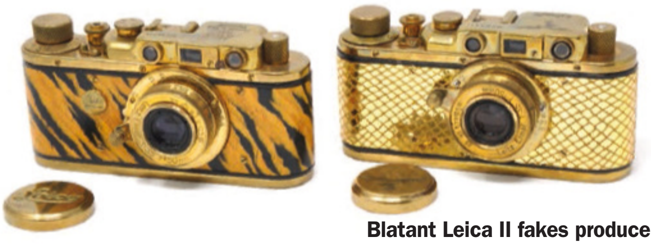


PICTURE COURTESY OF LEITZ AUCTION, VIENA

Left: Replica of the super-rare 0-Series Leica prototypes

0-Series

The original 0-Series prototype cameras, built in a limited number prior to production of the Leica I, are still around but fetch literally millions of pounds at auction. But in 2004, to mark the 125th birthday of Leica inventor Oskar Barnack, Leitz released fully-functioning replicas of the 0-Series. These regularly turn up at specialist auctions for £1,000-plus.



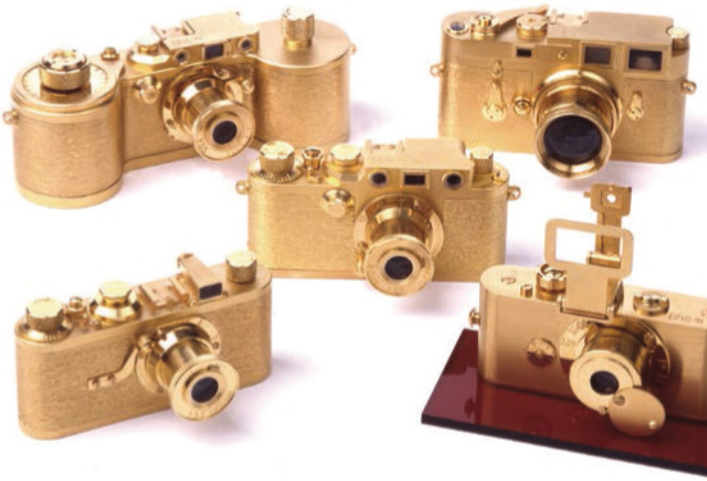
Blatant Leica II fakes produced for the collector's market

Leica fakes

Fed and Zorki cameras abound with fake engravings that make them difficult to differentiate from the originals until you check the serial numbers. Others, a lot more obvious to spot, boast strange body coverings like snakeskin, fake wood or gold lamé. Some of these claim to have been made for the Luftwaffe and even engrave a German eagle clutching a swastika in its claws on the body and lens cap. The cameras are made for collectors.

Gold-plated miniatures

Made by a company called Bim Ab/Eurofoto AB in Sweden in the 1990s, comes a set of half-scale gold-plated replicas of the Leica 250, Leica M3, Leica III, Leica I and Ur-Leica, all produced for the collector's market.



Gold-plated miniatures made in Sweden

The 2025 Leica

If you fancy getting a new Leica camera in 2025, what are your options? In essence, the firm's range has five strands. This includes three distinct kinds of fixed-lens compact camera: the zoom-lens D-Lux 8, the full-frame Q-series, and the Sofort 2 hybrid instant model. There's also the SL series of high-end L-mount full-frame mirrorless cameras. But pride of place in the line-up goes to the M-series rangefinders, which are available in both film and digital versions. Let's take a closer look.

Leica SOFORT 2

Perhaps surprisingly, the most affordable camera in Leica's line-up is this modern twist on the classic instant-camera concept. Based on the Fujifilm Instax Mini EVO, but with a distinctively Leica design twist, it's a hybrid offering that combines a small digital camera with an instant-film printer. Plenty of creative effects are on board, selected via a dial around the lens, while smartphone connectivity allows you to share the results on social media as well as create prints. It's available in red, black, or white for £360.

Leica D-Lux 8

This advanced zoom compact camera combines a 17MP Four-Thirds format sensor with a 24-75mm equivalent f/1.7-2.8 optically stabilised zoom lens. It's an evolution of the older D-Lux 7, but now benefits from a much-improved electronic viewfinder and a radically reworked control layout that's a closer match to the full-frame Q3. With a shutter speed dial on top and aperture ring around the lens, in many ways it can be seen as a zoom-lens alternative to the popular Fujifilm X100VI.

One unique attraction of this camera is its multi-aspect ratio design, whereby 1:1, 4:3, 3:2 and 16:9 modes with progressively wider horizontal fields of view can be selected via a switch on the lens. It lacks a tilting rear screen, but this helps to keep the body small. It's the least expensive 'proper' Leica you can buy, at £1,450.

Leica Q series

When the original Leica Q appeared in 2015, it was deliberately styled to resemble the M-series rangefinders, but with a fixed lens in front of a full-frame sensor. Fast-forward a decade, and there are now three models in the range. All boast traditional-looking control layouts with a shutter speed dial, aperture ring and manual focus ring, plus a large corner-mounted electronic viewfinder. They're all wonderful cameras to shoot with that deliver superb results.

Firstly, the Leica Q3 (£5,550) employs the same 28mm f/1.7 optically stabilised lens as the original, but with a 60MP full-frame sensor, high-quality 5.76m-dot electronic viewfinder, and tilting rear screen. Secondly, the Q2 Monochrom has the same lens, but employs a 47.3MP sensor that records black & white images only, for £5,300. Last but by no means least, the Q3 43 becomes the first in the line to use a different focal length, with a superb 43mm f/2 lens, for £5,900. Without doubt, these are the best fixed-lens compact cameras you can buy.

range

Andy Westlake guides you through the Leica cameras that you can currently buy new

Leica SL series

It's easy to forget that Leica was the second company after Sony to start making full-frame mirrorless cameras. Its third-generation models are designed to be professional workhorses that are capable of shooting in the most demanding environments. Thanks to the firm's L2 alliance with Panasonic, they employ the latest technologies including in-body image stabilisation, subject-detection autofocus, and high-end video features. They also offer a notably straightforward and stylishly designed user interface.

Looking first at the SL3, this boasts a 60MP sensor, up to 15fps continuous shooting, and 8K 30fps video shooting, all for £5,920. You also get a large, detailed viewfinder and a tilting rear touchscreen. The control layout is strikingly pared back compared to other pro-spec cameras, with custom buttons around the body that can be configured to suit the user's needs.

Meanwhile the 24MP SL3-S is Leica's newest model, released at the start of 2025 and costing £4,500. It's the firm's fastest camera ever, being capable of 30fps shooting complete with continuous AF. It also includes an array of advanced video features, including 6K 30p 'open gate' recording, and boasts Content Credentials support for verifying the authenticity of its images.

Leica M series

At the heart of Leica's camera range lie its iconic M-series rangefinders. These have been produced continuously for 70 years, and seamlessly made the transition from film to digital while retaining recognisably the same design. They employ simple manual controls, with manual focusing via a rangefinder spot in the centre of the direct vision optical viewfinder. It's a very straightforward way of working, and many photographers find that this simplicity allows them to immerse themselves fully in the moment while shooting.

The various digital models are all based on the M11 platform. This employs a 60MP sensor that's also capable of delivering DNG raw files at 36MP and 18MP resolutions. The viewfinder provides 0.73x magnification and includes framelines covering focal lengths from 28mm to 135mm. There's a choice of manual or aperture-priority exposure, and the cameras don't make any attempt to record video.

Four digital M variants are available. The base Leica M11 comes in a choice of black, silver, and glossy black paint versions for £7,900. Then the M11-P (for 'professional') boasts a more discreet design and includes support for Content Credentials image verification, for £8,000. For those who'd like a more film-like experience, the M11-D (£8,100) has no rear screen, with a large ISO dial on the back and secondary settings controlled from a smartphone. Finally, the Leica M11 Monochrom uses a modified sensor that records only in black & white, giving improved detail, tonality, and high-ISO noise performance. It even comes in a stylish monochrome finish, for £8,300.

Leica is also one of the few camera makers that still produces 35mm film cameras. Its MP model is designed to last users a lifetime, with a mechanical shutter that means batteries are only required to power the light meter. It costs £5,080. Meanwhile, the current M6 (£4,990) pays homage to the classic model that was produced from 1984 to 1999, with similar styling and an angled rapid rewind crank. But otherwise, it's mostly based on the MP. Finally, the MA (Typ 127) is an even simpler camera that does without a lightmeter, so it doesn't require batteries at all. It comes in a choice of silver chrome or black chrome for £4,910.

Leica rangefinders for digital and film: the M11 (top) and M6

April 12 meeting in Columbus, Ohio

© JAMES LAGER

A global society

Leica Society International (LSI) brings together Leica collectors and users from around the world. Its Vice President, **William Fagan**, tells us more

The Leica brand is justifiably famous among photographers all around the world. This is not only because of the wonderful cameras, lenses and other equipment produced by the company, but also because of the rich history and heritage created by the photographers who used the products of the firm from Wetzlar in Germany. Examples of such photographers would include the great Henri Cartier-Bresson, Elliott Erwitt, Constantine Manos and Terry O'Neill.

History

When our society was formed in 1968 as Leica Collectors International there were just 12 charter members, including Rolf Fricke and Jim Lager, a collector/author and a historian/author respectively, who are still with us today. In 1970 with about 80 members on board, the name became Leica Historical Society of America (LHSA) a name by which it was known for many years. The society grew fast and by 1978 it had 500 members.

Initially the membership was largely based in the US, but membership also grew around the world as Leica users began to know the society through the LHSA *Viewfinder* magazine and its society meetings around the world. Over a decade ago the tag The International Leica Society was added after LHSA.

At its Dublin Conference in 2022, the society changed its name to

Above: Initially, the membership of the LSI was largely based in the US. Image by James Lager

Leica Society
INTERNATIONAL

Viewfinder
THE QUARTERLY JOURNAL OF LEICA SOCIETY INTERNATIONAL
VOLUME 57, ISSUE 2

IMAGE ON THE COVER © DAVID KNOBLE

A cover of *Viewfinder*, with image by LSI President, David Knoble

What to get wrong!

© JONO SLACK

The club organises regular Zoom presentations, this one by Jono Slack

Leica Society International to reflect the fact that it had now grown to almost 3,000 members in 74 different countries. The US still has the largest membership group with about half of current members. In Europe there are about 1,000 members, with the UK having 250 members, Germany 180 and in the rest of the world our members are widely spread around the Middle East, Africa, Asia, including China and Japan, Australasia, the Pacific Islands and South America.

Magazine and social media

One of the main channels that joins members together in so many countries is our award-winning society magazine, *Viewfinder*, which has twice been voted as best society magazine of the year in the US. The magazine contains articles and photographs by members and leading photographers, and features material on all the latest cameras and lenses from Leica, including reports from the well-known British tester for Leica, Jono Slack, who is a member of LSI's Board of Directors. The historical side is also featured, with regular articles by Jim Lager and others on the great history and heritage of Leica.

© STEVEN DENTE

Above: By Steven Dente – theme 'Through the Frame', taken at a high-rise building in London

LSI also has regular Zoom presentations put on exclusively for members on the use of Leica equipment – such as one (see above) by Jono Slack on Exposure and Capturing the Decisive Moment.

LSI has several lively WhatsApp channels for members, one of which features a recurring Leica Akademie challenge run by Wayne Goodman of Manchester,

© KARTHIK RAMANI

England, who has recently joined our Board of Directors. This involves giving a theme or subject, to which members respond by posting images on the WhatsApp group. The first image shows Wayne randomly choosing a 'theme card 'from the Leica Akademie (Leica's educational entity) set of themes.

LSI also has a presence on Instagram, Facebook and YouTube.

Meetings

One of the main ways that members get together is through our series of meetings which currently features two meets in the spring, called Spring Shoots, and the annual meeting in the autumn. This year there are spring meetings in Charleston, South Carolina, in April and Vienna in May; and the annual meeting will be in Montreal in October. Next year the society plans to hold a conference in the UK. These meetings provide a mix of social activities as well as presentations by members and professional Leica users and, also, by key staff at the Leica company – including figures such as Stefan Daniel, Executive Vice President of Technology and Operations, and Peter Karbe, Head of Lens Design. Members can talk directly to the people who design and make their cameras and lenses.

Every four years or so, LSI visits the Leica HQ in Wetzlar where the conference takes place as usual, with the addition of factory visits and tours of the Ernst Leitz Museum and Leica Archives.

This group photo (see right) shows members from over 20 different countries standing in front of

© WAYNE GOODMAN

© LSI

Far left: Image by Karthik Ramani, from the Akademie theme, 'Loved Ones'

Above: A shot by Wayne Goodman

Left: Another visit by the society to Leica HQ

© MIKE EVANS

Leica's Stefan Daniel, image by Mike Evans

© LSI

A visit to the Leica Archives

the Ernst Leitz Hotel in Wetzlar after our last conference there in 2023. Renowned Magnum photographer Steve McCurry is at the far left, front.

Smaller groups went on visits to the Leica Archives where a lot of the history of Leica is recorded and kept in an archive that goes right back to the very beginning.

Last year LSI members from no fewer than 18 countries went to visit the Leica Factory near Porto in Portugal, where they were brought on tours by the local Leica management in white coats.

© WAYNE GOODMAN

Grants and competitions

The LSI runs several annual competitions for young and aspiring photographers. There are two main categories, the Annual Grant and the Women Photographers Grant. The winner of the Annual Grant in 2020 was Ana Maria Arevalo Gosen from Venezuela, whose project was called Dios Eternos – women's prison life in Venezuela. The following year her project went on to win the prestigious global Leica Oskar Barnack Award, named after the creator of the Leica.

The society sees its grant programme, which has prizes of cash and cameras, as a way of passing on the torch to the next generation of photographers.

There are many other benefits for members of the society, including access to a full archive of Leica literature as well as regular sweepstakes for cameras and lenses. The most recent sweepstake was for the much-sought-after Leica Q3 43.

Camaraderie

With a membership of almost 3,000 worldwide, the society works hard at creating the sense of community which is more easily created in local camera clubs that meet once a week or month. There is a great sense of camaraderie at all our events, and all are made to feel welcome, no matter where they come from.

Above: Members of the LSI visiting the Leica factory near Porto in Portugal. Image by Wayne Goodman

Left: A visit to Leica factory requires the wearing of white coats. Image by Wayne Goodman

Right: Images by Ana Maria Arevalo Gosen, winner of the 2020 Women Photographers Grant, for her work depicting life in Venezualan prisons

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© ANA MARIA AREVALO GOSEN

© ANA MARIA AREVALO GOSEN

How to Join

Membership starts at $70 per annum for digital membership and can be done online – scan the QR code below to get started. **https://leicasocietyinternational.org/join-today#join**

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Amateur Photographer
Email ap.ed@kelsey.co.uk

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LETTER OF THE WEEK

Micro Four Thirds musings

The wildlife portfolio by Terry Moore (*Reader Portfolio*, 25 February) have to be some of the best photos I've seen in your magazine. Unbelievably, because they've been taken with Micro Four Thirds gear, which, when you look at all the mirrorless offerings around, is quite something.

For some time now I've had an itch to get another camera. I use a Panasonic G9 body with a Panasonic 14-140mm mk2 lens. I have compared this combo against a Nikon Z7II with an equivalent Z lens and a Fujifilm medium format camera, and there is no difference in quality when the pictures are blown up. If Micro Four Thirds can give that level of picture quality, with its low weight and relative cheapness, I will definitely stick with this format.
Paul Janssens

© TERRY MOORE
One of Terry's superb wildlife images

Indeed Micro Four Thirds systems can of course deliver excellent wildlife images – just look at the work of noted exponents such as Andrew Fusek Peters and Tesni Ward, not to mention Terry's work.

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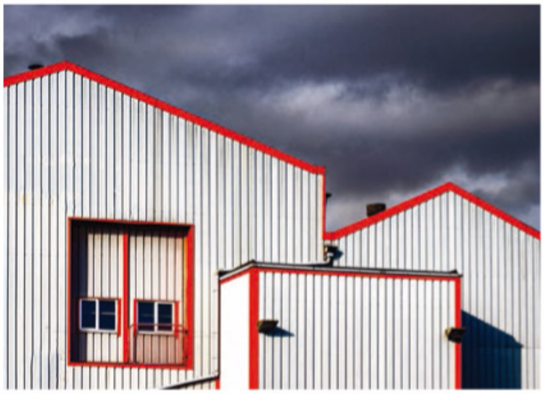
Captain of industry

Here is my picture of an industrial estate in Ibrox, Glasgow. Not at first glance a great subject, but as we all know, there are pictures everywhere! I was taken by the combination of colours and shapes. I brought up the reds and whites in Lightroom and desaturated and darkened the sky. I used a Nikon Zf with a 24-200mm Nikkor lens. **Stuart Neville**


© STUART NEVILLE

We love this capture and it's always good to remind readers that pictures can be found everywhere. Why jet off to the Azores when there Is Ibrox!

Mr Frost should chill

I have little sympathy with the vaguely sarcastic letter from Tom Frost about AP featuring expensive equipment. Even when I was a teenager with absolutely no money, yearning for a camera, any camera, I lapped up everything that was published. Not once did I take issue with the prices then (which in real terms were substantially higher than now). Five decades on, I'm more than happy to read about cameras I can't afford, or do not particularly want.
Des Hill

To be fair to Tom, it was hard to tell if he was being sarcastic, and he's right to point out the relatively high cost of some cameras and lenses these days. We don't self-censor when it comes to featuring or testing more expensive new gear for the reasons you outline above, but we try to run regular money-saving features and include more budget gear too.

Let there be light

Like your correspondent David Price (AP 18 February) I applaud OM System's introduction of the relatively small and lightweight OM-3. Bear in mind, another well-known maker, like OM, has eschewed full frame and recently brought out a fully-featured mirrorless camera that weighs little more than the lovely OM-3. The Fujifilm X-T50 achieves this despite using a significantly bigger sensor than OM (APS-C) which it exploits with a digital teleconverter, and it is fast becoming a cult with followers new to photography who like something lightweight that has many film simulations and can produce excellent results straight from the camera. So, lightweights are definitely 'trending' in the photography world!
Adrian Johnson

THIS WEEK WE ASKED...

Have you ever been published in a book or magazine?

You said...

Glynis Pierson @glynpierson
Yes, courtesy of yourselves #APPicoftheweek Ely Cathedral, another of poppies at sunrise in @AP_Magazine and front cover of a local magazine @Fen_SCENE with Koniks in winter.

Z70 Photography @z70photo
Yes, *Amateur Photographer* magazine, you may have heard of it.

Steve Sulley @SteveSulley1
Yes, *Amateur Photographer*! Plus *Lonely Planet* and *Practical Photographer* magazine.

Allan Moore
I had a picture published in a local magazine called *The Mill*. They had a piece on local (to Paisley) photographers and included a shot of mine that I took in Gleniffer Braes, this was in 2021.

Ian Hutchinson @ ianhutchinson81
Six-page spread in *Nikon Owner* magazine.

© Nick Allott Photography @NickAPhotos
No, but it's a dream of mine.

Jeff Johnson @JeffJohnson41
Yes. My proudest moment was 26 May 2018 when the wonderful Roger Hicks used one of my pictures for the subject in his 'Final Analysis' column!

Fobo Bright
Yes, in AP magazine, *The Sherborne Times*, PIC (doesn't exist now), *Gironde* magazine, Arcadia and Dorset Artists. *North Devon Journal* and *Bournemouth Echo*. One photograph on the cover of a friend's CD and one of my photographs in a poetry book. I think that's it.
Oh, just remembered, one of my shortlisted photographs from Pink Lady World Food Photographer was published in *Business Traveller* and a runner-up image from LCE POTY is in their book.

Peter Ribbeck Photography
Yes, the front cover of the *Landscape Photographer of the Year* competition book.

Hugh Maxwell
Yes, in the most recent awards book for *The Scottish Landscape Photographer of the Year*.

Johan @Johan_Adidaya
Long time ago some of my photography have been displayed at news agency EyePress Photo – Asia photojournalists, in Hong Kong.

Edward TRoss
I've had quite a few in AP, always a buzz.
And my photo of a glasshouse in a stately home featured in a book called *Glasshouses* by Fiona Grant. A proud moment indeed. Still available for Kindle, if you're interested!

Share your photos and comments with us on social!
See page 3 for how to contact us

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Professor Newman on...

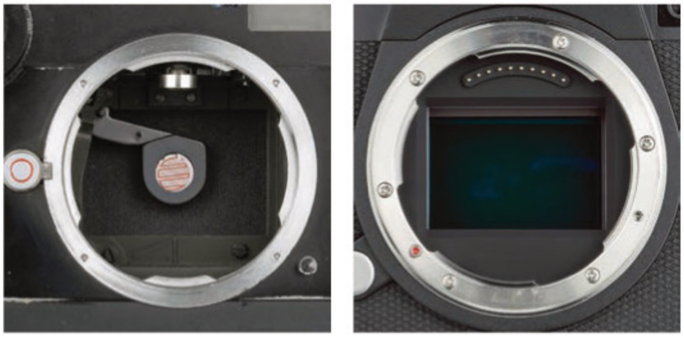
Climbing Mount Leica

Professor Newman traces the history of Leica's influential lens mounts

Oskar Barnack's design of the Ur-Leica established what became the dominant film format. Since then Leica has been the most influential of camera companies. It is the only company that has designed three different lens mounts, which were then used by other major optical companies for their cameras. The first was the 39-millimetre thread mount used in the Leica 1(C), the commercialised version of Barnack's original. It was subsequently used on cameras from many different companies.

Leica changed to the bayonet M mount in 1954. This mount was patented, so was not used by other companies until the patent had expired. Then it was employed by Minolta, Konica, Ricoh, Epson, Voigtländer, Rollei and Zeiss Ikon (the last four all being Cosina made).

Sixty years later, Leica designed a new mount for its 'T' mirrorless camera. A year later, it was named the 'L-mount' when it was used on the full-frame SL camera. Three years later the 'L-Mount Alliance' was announced, sharing this mount between Leica, Sigma and Panasonic. Since then, Black Magic Design and DJI have also produced L-mount cameras.



Two Leica four-claw bayonets: the M mount (left) and L mount (right)

An unusual feature that the latter two mounts share is that they are four-claw bayonets. Most bayonet designs have three claws, following the pattern established by the Kine Exakta in 1936, the first mass-production 35mm single lens reflex. After the 1959 introduction of the Nikon F, which featured the first modern embodiment of the three-claw design, this became the default for SLR cameras, including Leica's own. Intriguingly, Nikon's mirrorless Z mount is a four-claw design.

The two design patterns have their own advantages and disadvantages. A four-claw design will provide a more secure attachment between lens and mounting ring, and its smaller angle of rotation should provide for faster lens changing, at least in theory. On the other hand the mount needs to be made with more precision – which was likely not a problem for a manufacturer such as Leica.

A more subtle comparison lies with the way that the loads of the lens are transferred from the lens mount to the camera mount ring, and through the screws attaching that to the camera body. The compression forces on the lens bear on the whole of the mount ring, and push it onto the camera. Therefore these forces do not load the mounting screws. On the other hand the tension forces, those trying to separate the lens and camera, are taken by the lens mount claws then transferred through the lens mount ring to the mounting screws. The best place to position a screw is adjacent to a mount claw. Otherwise the mount ring could deform and act as a lever, increasing the force trying to pull the screw out. It only takes one screw pulling out to ruin the camera, so this is a case of the strength of the weakest link, rather than the number of links.

The original M-mount cameras used four screws, positioned at each end of two of the claws. Those cameras were constructed from a flattened piece of brass telescope tube, and this position ensures that the screws are subject to minimum leverage and also screw into the location where the body is strongest. Modern cameras have cast or moulded internal chassis, so can be designed to provide strength wherever it is required. L-mount cameras use five or six screws distributed evenly round the mount, the theory presumably being that the number of screws reduces the effective length of any lever. Interestingly, Nikon has embraced the former Leica philosophy, with four screws, each positioned precisely at a claw.

Bob Newman is currently Professor of Computer Science at the University of Wolverhampton. He has been working with the design and development of high-technology equipment for 35 years and two of his products have won innovation awards. Bob is also a camera nut and a keen amateur photographer

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Think Leica, think Henri Cartier-Bresson – but he was certainly not the only famous user

Some famous Leica users

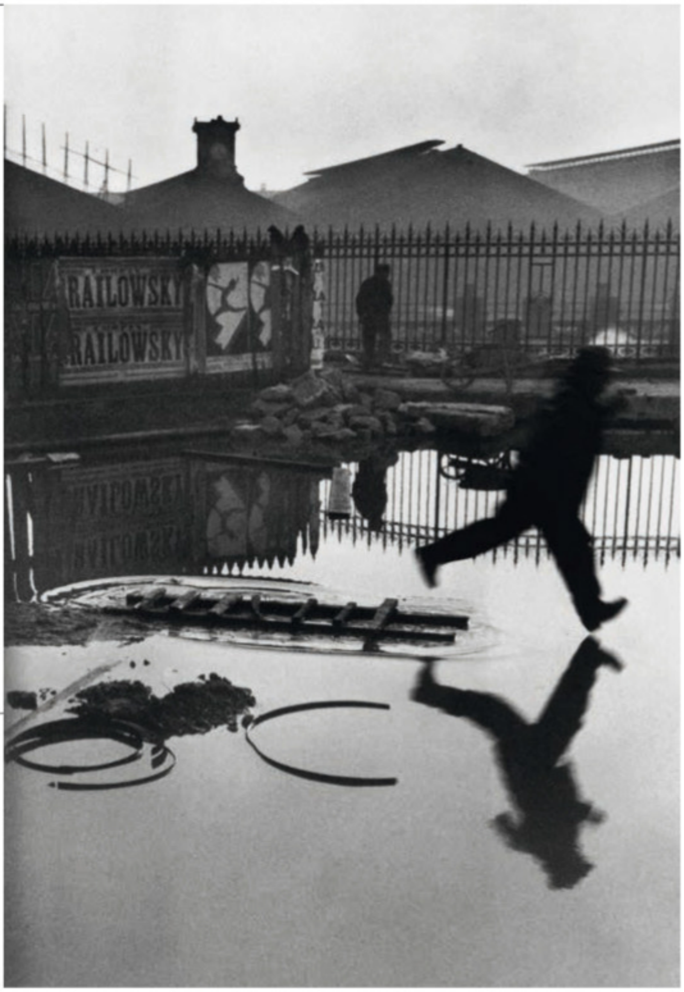
So many great documentary, street and travel photographers have shot with Leica. **Geoff Harris** celebrates some of the brand's best-known fans

We could easily devote half of this issue to famous Leica users, as so many great photographers had (or have) a lifelong allegiance to the red dot. With so much else to talk about in our Leica special issue, however, space is limited – so over the next six pages we celebrate some of the most significant and influential photographers who've been seen with Leica gear around their necks. Given that there has been such a large and distinguished roster of Leica-loving photographers, choosing the selection here has not been an easy task, but we've tried to include a mixture of the greats. Note: the last time we ran such a feature, back in 2014, we only featured famous male photographers – so we've tried to redress the balance this time around!

Henri Cartier-Bresson (1908-2004)

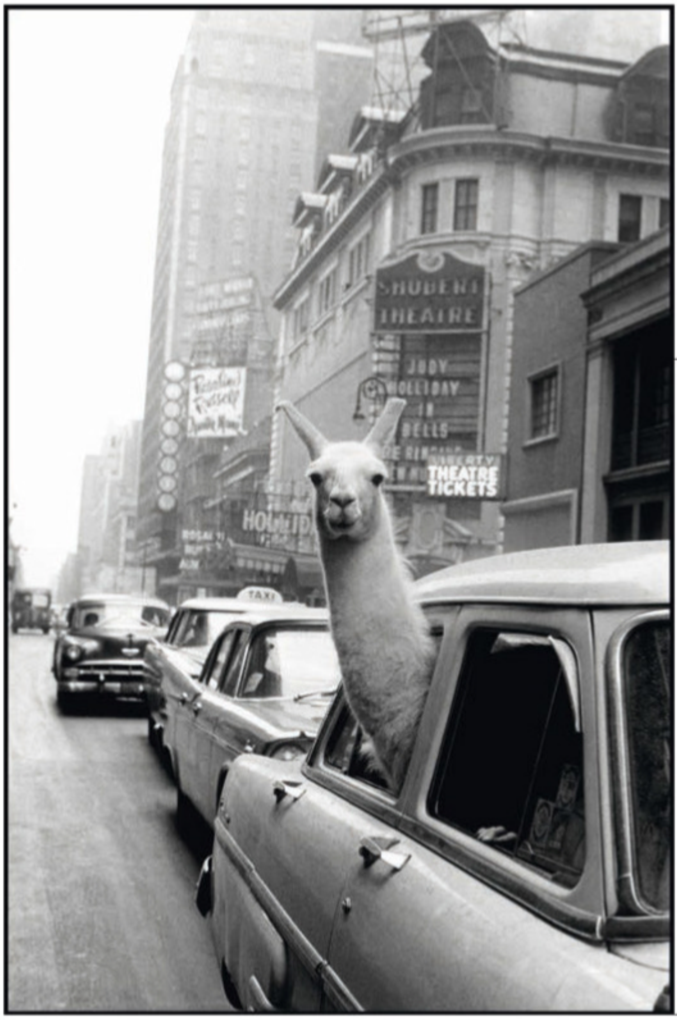
More than any other photographer, Henri Cartier-Bresson has become synonymous with Leica, and vice versa. The image of the dapper, eagle-eyed Frenchman, gliding along streets all over the world with his Leica M3 carefully concealed, has become an archetype in street photography. Originally trained as a painter and strongly grounded in classic and contemporary European culture, Cartier-Bresson had a huge influence on the development of photojournalism and street photography in the 20th century. He chose Leica because the 35mm cameras were small and discreet, enabling him to capture the 'decisive moment' as it unfolded, without attracting undue attention.

While he favoured a 50mm prime lens for its relatively natural perspective, strongly believing that 'the camera is an extension of the eye,' he used a range of Leica bodies throughout his career. Before the Second World War, his cameras of choice were Leica II and III series rangefinders, but he will be forever associated with the Leica M3, which was released in 1953. As he writes in the introduction to his book, *The Decisive Moment*, published in 1952: 'I had just discovered the Leica. It became an extension of my eye, and I have never been separated from it since I found it. I prowled the streets all day, feeling very strung-up and ready to pounce, determined to "trap" life – to preserve life in the act of living.' Cartier-Bresson *is* Leica.



Behind the Gare Saint-Lazare (1932)

© FONDATION HENRI CARTIER-BRESSON / MAGNUM PHOTOS



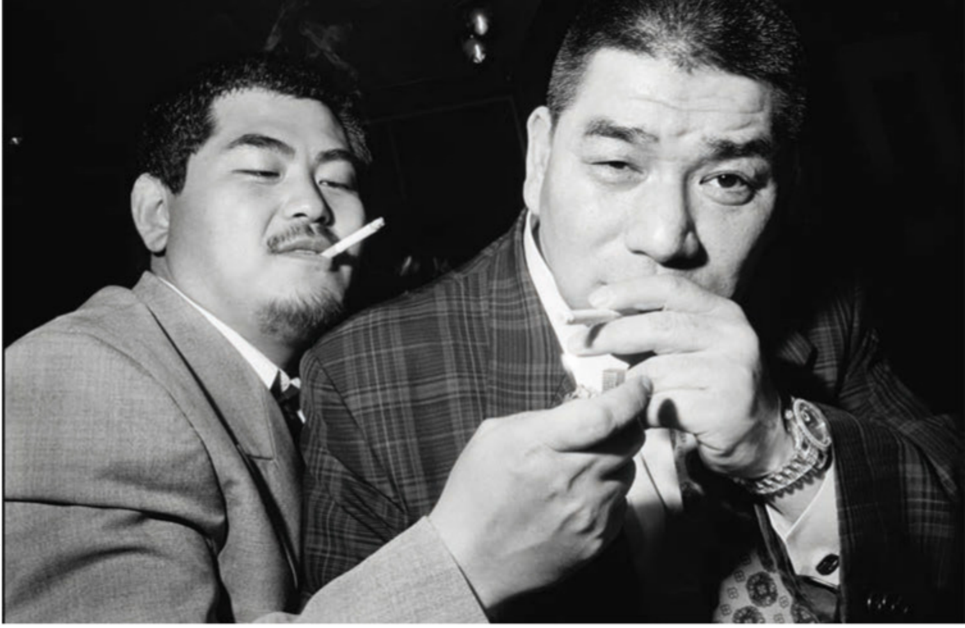
A llama in Times Square, New York. 1957

© INGE MORATH/MAGNUM PHOTOS

Inge Morath (1923-2002)

Inge Morath was only the second female member of Magnum Photos and although this quirky and charming image of Linda the Llama has become world famous, she still doesn't get all the recognition she deserves. Morath joined Magnum in 1949 after meeting Robert Capa, himself a keen Leica user before the Second World War, and was sent to Spain in 1954 for her first big reportage assignment. Her images appeared in *Picture Post* and other photo-led magazines, shot on a series of Leica M-series rangefinders. As she explained in a biographical article on her website, ingemorath.org, 'I bought a used Leica, worked incessantly and, as I was known as the only non-photographing person in this milieu and knew I would not be taken seriously if I suddenly showed up with photographs, I turned my name around and, as Egni Tharom, started sending my picture stories to any magazine I thought might be interested.'

Morath went on working steadily as a documentary, travel and portrait photographer, well into old age. Fun facts: in 1968 Cartier- Bresson gave her one of his black paint Leica M3s, which later sold for a pile at auction; the pair also worked together shooting stills for the 1960 movie *The Misfits*, starring Marilyn Monroe and Clark Gable.



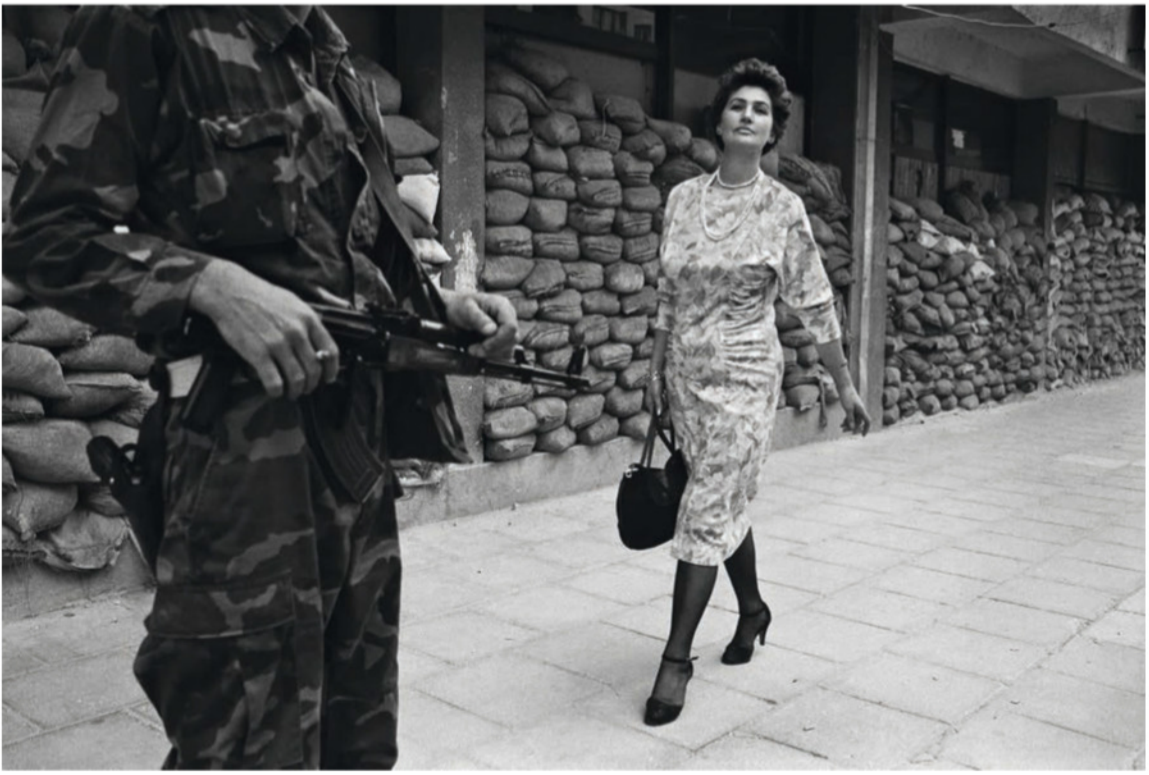
© BRUCE GILDEN/MAGNUM PHOTOS

Yakuza, Japan, 1998

Bruce Gilden (born 1946)

Nobody is better known for 'in your face' street photography than Bruce Gilden, and although his ruthlessly candid, warts-and-all portraits strike some contemporary viewers as being cold and even exploitative, you can't deny their impact. A native New Yorker, Gilden certainly isn't the shy and retiring type, qualities that were definitely required when photographing Yakuza gangsters in Tokyo and Osaka – long before these fascinating cities became such a trendy destination for street photographers.

As with Cartier-Bresson, Gilden has long favoured Leica rangefinders and lenses for their relatively compact dimensions and low weight. M-series rangefinders allow him to get up and close and personal to his sometimes surprised subjects, which is a hallmark of his work. 'One of the reasons I use a Leica is that I couldn't do what I do – and walk around for as long as I do – if I had a heavy camera that was also quite obvious,' he said in a 2011 interview. 'This allows me to do the wonderful pictures that the whole world just loves (oh – some of the world loves). The Leica's small body is so cute, I used to call it my child. Then I had my daughter and I found out what it was really like to have a child. Wow, I prefer my Leica!'



© TOM STODDART (SEE ALSO TOM'S BOOK, *EXTRAORDINARY WOMEN*, PUBLISHED BY ACC ART BOOKS)

Meliha Varešanovic, 1992

Tom Stoddart (1953-2021)

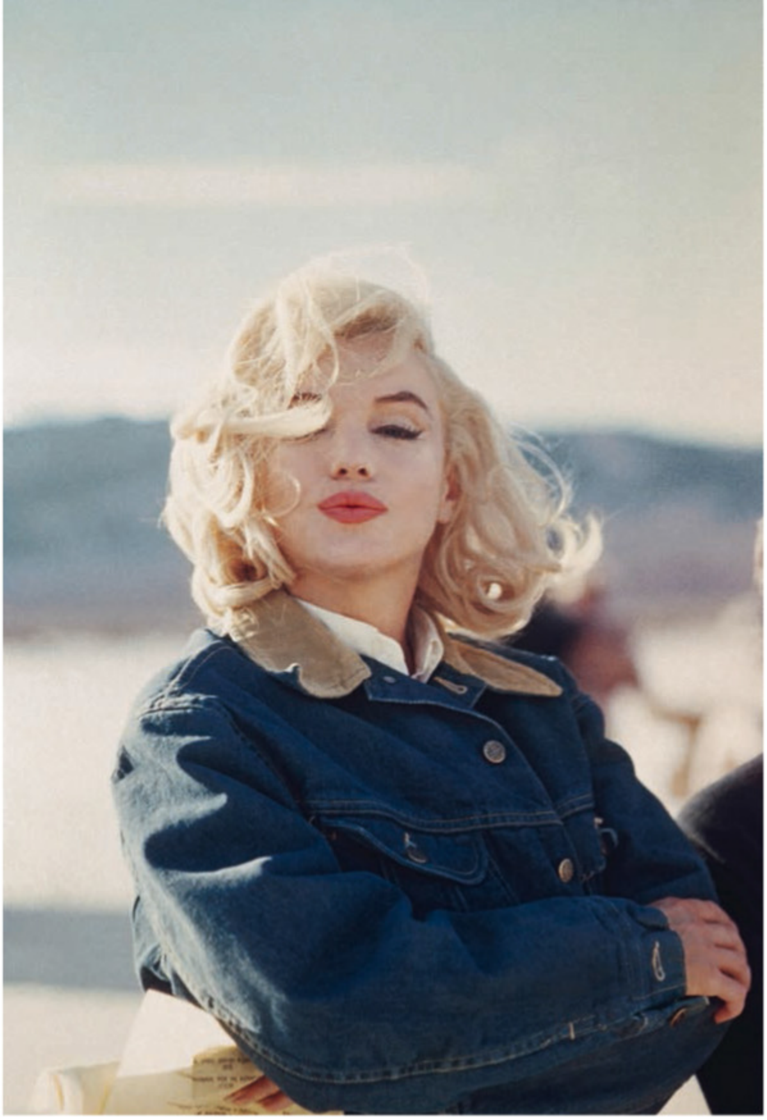
Of all the eminent Leica photographers featured here, Tom Stoddart is the closest to AP's heart. This eminent and highly respected photojournalist was always generous about giving interviews, and was genuinely humbled to receive our Exceptional Achievement Award in 2020. Tom began his photographic career on local newspapers in his beloved North East, before moving to London and building a solid reputation as a photojournalist, most notably for his coverage of Desert Storm. He really made his name, however, with his images from the frontline of the civil war in the former Yugoslavia (he was seriously injured by Serbian artillery while covering the siege of Sarajevo in 1992). The image used here, of Meliha Varešanovic striding defiantly down 'sniper alley' in the besieged city, is the stuff of legend.

'I started shooting exclusively on Leica cameras around 1990 with an M6,' he told AP. 'Ergonomically, Leicas are beautiful pieces of engineering and the quality of the lenses is a massive plus… Leicas allow you to be inconspicuous, work quickly and quietly and move on to the next situation, much more easily than you can with a huge piece of glass. You make great pictures with your head and your heart, not the camera you're using, but you want the very best tool available to help you do that.'

Eve Arnold (1912-2012)

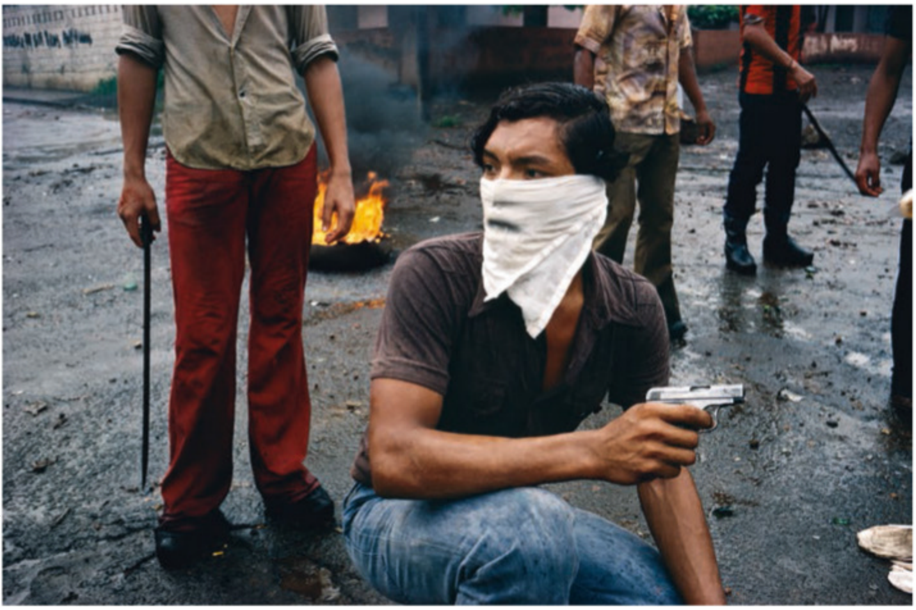
Eve Arnold was a pioneering US photojournalist and portrait photographer who shot Hollywood stars, notably Marilyn Monroe, whilst simultaneously exploring racial equality, religion, sexuality and human rights in a fiercely male-dominated industry. In 1957 she became the first woman to join Magnum Photos.

Her start in photography was not auspicious, however. Back in 1950, she attended a masterclass by photographer Alexi Brodovitch in New York, only to have her images ridiculed by the rest of the class. Undeterred, Arnold went out and shot the fashion shows which took place every Sunday in black churches. This time, Brodovitch responded positively to her work, and some of the images were published in *Picture Post* magazine – catching the eye of Cartier-Bresson and Robert Capa and leading to the historic invitation to join the recently formed Magnum Photos agency. Cartier-Bresson in particular was a big influence on Arnold, and she too become a keen Leica user; in 1963, Robert Penn photographed her using a Leica M rangefinder and 50mm lens on the set of the Richard Burton movie *Becket*, though she too went on to use a range of other cameras during her long and storied career.



© EVE ARNOLD/MAGNUM PHOTOS

Marilyn Monroe on the Nevada desert during the filming of *The Misfits*, 1960



© SUSAN MEISELAS/MAGNUM PHOTOS

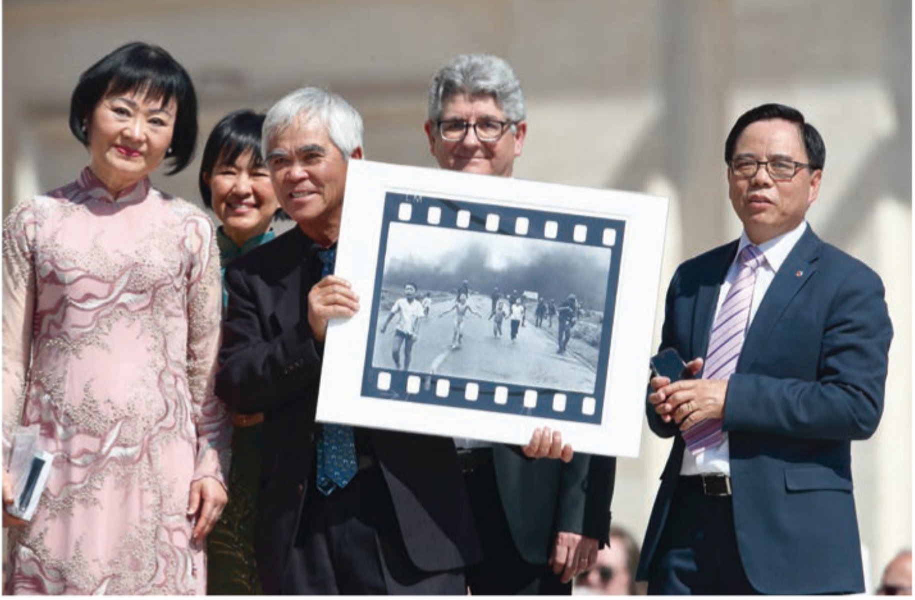
Nicaragua, 1979

Susan Meiselas (born 1948)

While Susan Meiselas is arguably best known for her hard-hitting images of the Nicaraguan civil war in the late 1970s, she is also a hugely versatile documentary photographer who's worked everywhere from Kurdistan to the Black Country (some of her early black & white projects, including strippers at US county fairs, reminds one of the work of another great Leica photographer, Mary Ellen Mark – a comparison we are sure Meiselas would be pleased with). While she's gone on to use a range of digital gear, Meiselas mainly shot the Sandinista uprising in Nicaragua with Leica M4 and M2 rangefinder cameras, coupled with 28 and 35mm prime lenses.

'The camera is an excuse to be someplace you otherwise don't belong,' she remarked in an interview with the Whitney Museum of Modern Art. 'It gives me both a point of connection and a point of separation,' she has remarked.

Some of Susan Meiselas's images from Nicaragua will be on display at this year's Photo Frome festival, which takes place in the Somerset town from 5 April to 27 April – see photofrome.org/festival-2025/



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Nick Ut (centre) with Kim Phúc (left), the girl in the photo, after meeting the Pope in 2022

Nick Ut (born 1951)

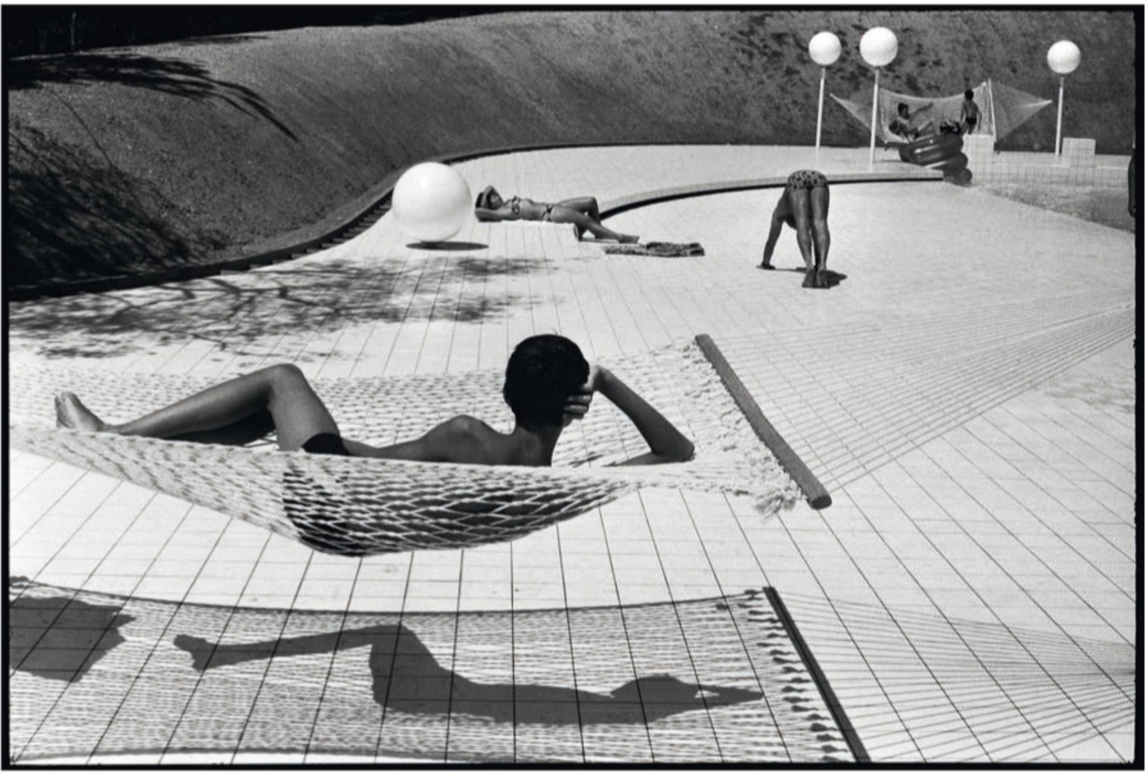
Nick Ut needs no introduction to anyone with an interest in documentary photography, or the often-traumatic history of the 20th century.

His image of burnt and terrified Vietnamese children running from a napalm attack in 1972 can never be forgotten, nor should it be. The shocking picture, which many historians believe helped to end the agony of the Vietnam war, was taken on a Leica M2 coupled with a 35mm f/2 lens and loaded with Kodak Tri-X film.

'As soon as I clicked the shutter, I knew I had something special,' Ut told me in a 2022 interview. 'It took Horst Faas (chief photographer of the Associated Press's Saigon bureau) to fight for it to be published, but fight he did… and the rest is history.'

The first picture editor to see Ut's developed image rejected it, fearing that the nudity of the burnt girl meant it could never be published in the US. Unbelievably, the image was almost binned, but Faas, along with Associated Press correspondent Peter Arnett, returned from lunch in the nick of time and realised that they had something very special on their hands. On their orders, the photograph then went from Saigon to Tokyo to New York by radiophoto transmitter, and soon was horrifying the world.

The story of 'Napalm Girl' took another twist earlier this year, when a new documentary movie called *The Stringer* aired allegations that the image was taken by another South Vietnamese photographer, despite Ut getting all the credit and winning a Pulitzer Prize. Both Nick Ut and the Associated Press strongly refute this, and he remains a keen Leica user and evangelist, travelling the world for events and workshops.



© MARTINE FRANCK | MAGNUM PHOTOS

Pool designed by Alain Capeilleres. Town of Le Brusc. Provence, France. 1976

Martine Franck (1938-2012)

Martine Franck was a British-Belgian documentary and portrait photographer and member of Magnum Photos for over 32 years. Indeed, it was something of a family affair, as she became the second wife of Henri Cartier-Bresson and served as president of the foundation bearing his name. There was much more to Franck than being Cartier-Bresson's other half, however. She first made her name as a photographer during a trip to Asia in the early 1960s, taking along a Leica camera that was borrowed from her cousin, coupled with 35mm and 50mm prime lenses. Following this, she built a strong career as a photographer for various news and fashion magazines, co-founding the Viva picture agency in 1972 and joining Magnum Photos in 1980.

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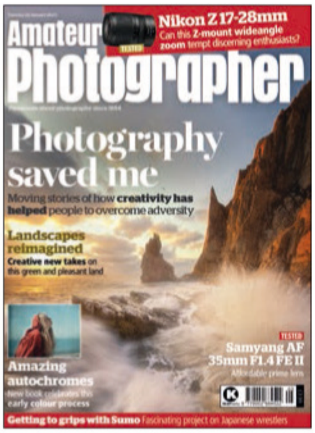

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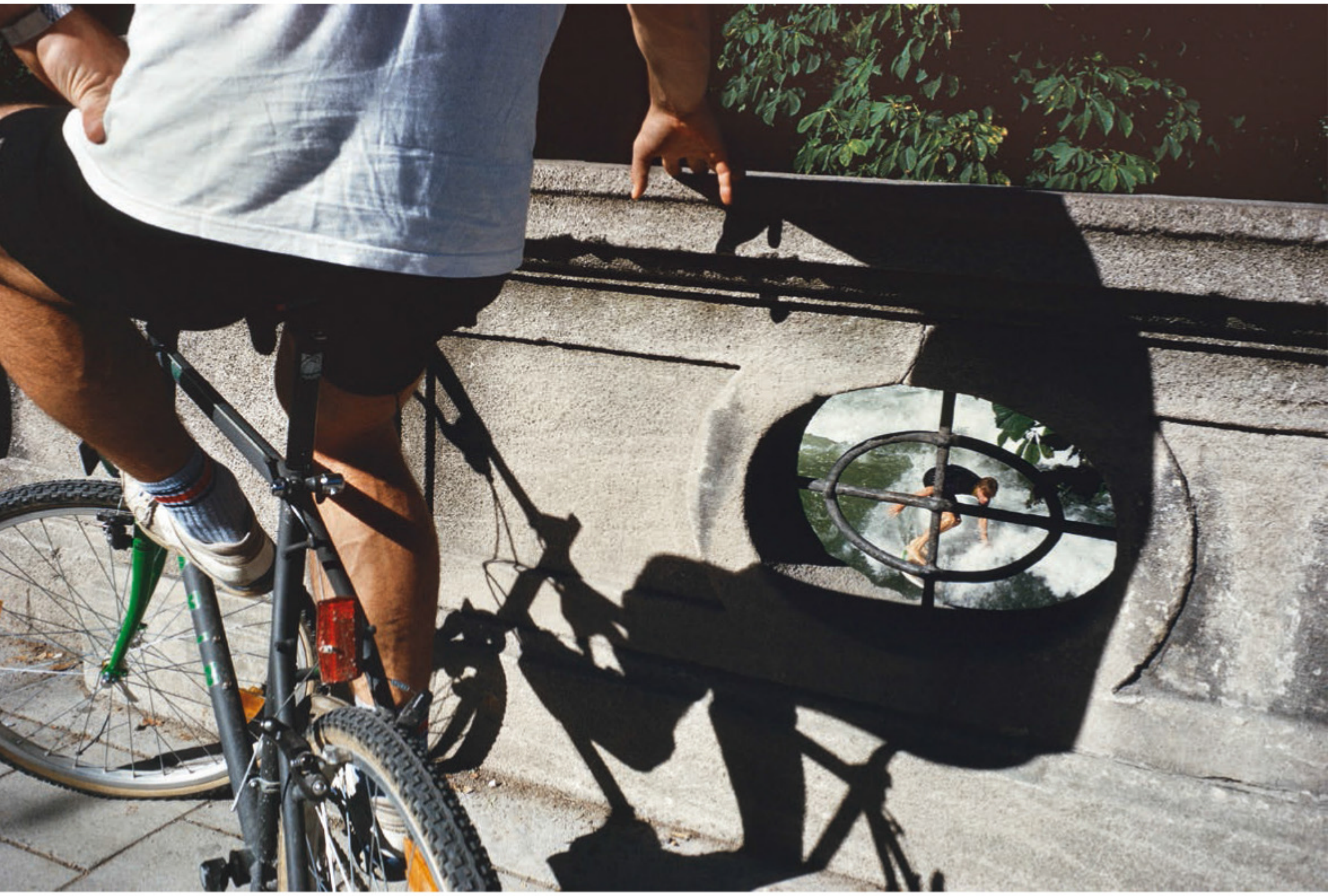

© AEX WEBB | MAGNUM PHOTOS

Germany. Munich. 1991

Alex Webb (born 1952)

A hugely versatile and creative photographer, as well as a noted Leica user, Webb became interested in the medium during his high school years – studying photography at the Carpenter Center for the Arts while also earning a degree in history and literature from Harvard University. In 1974 he began working as a professional photojournalist, becoming a full member of Magnum Photos in 1979.

During the mid-1970s, Webb photographed in the American South, documenting small-town life in black & white. He also began working in the Caribbean and Mexico, which prompted his starting to photograph in colour – something which he has continued to do to this day.

'The first Leica that I owned was an M2,' Webb told AP in a 2014 interview. 'I find that working with a rangefinder enables me to work in deep space differently than I would with a single-lens reflex. I like being able to see all elements of the potential photograph in focus simultaneously… I simply take photographs differently with a Leica rangefinder camera than with an SLR.'

Famous for other reasons

Leica has also brought out special-edition cameras and accessories in partnership with famous users who made their name outside the world of photography. Notable examples include a Leica M-P set with US rock star Lenny Kravitz, plus a Leica M Monochrom signature edition with former Police guitarist, Andy Summers. The company also teamed with US singer Seal on a limited-edition Q2 compact in 2022, and brought out a Leica Q2 '007' edition in 2021 to celebrate the Bond movie, *No Time to Die*. The most recent celebrity tie-up came last month, when Leica released the Burton Edition of the Sofort 2 instant camera, in partnership with snowboard pioneer and long-time Leica user, Jake Burton Carpenter.

The Leica M Monochrom 'Signature by Andy Summers,' came out in 2019

© ERNST LEITZ FOUNDATION

The importance of being Ernst

Ernst Leitz II of the Leica camera company was at the centre of a rescue effort in which Jews were smuggled out of Nazi Germany before the Holocaust. **Peter Dench** finds out more

When Soviet Red Army naval officer and photographer Yevgeny Khaldei pressed the shutter on his Leica to capture The Raising of the Red Flag on the Reichstag in May 1945, he captured an iconic moment which marked one of the great victories of the Second World War. The authenticity of the photograph has been questioned (Soviet censors airbrushed out wristwatches on one soldier because they were indicative of looting). The camera Khaldei used, a 1937 Leica III, is beyond doubt. It was sold at auction in Hong Kong in 2014 for around £150,000. It may be surprising Khaldei used a camera manufactured by the enemy but he used Leicas throughout his career, a testament to their unrivalled quality at the time.

The Nazis also recognised the superiority of Leica optics. In August 1937 Hitler's minister of propaganda, Joseph Goebbels, reportedly instructed news photographers that the 'use and promotion of small modern cameras constitute[s] a duty inherent to their mission.' Two years later, he dispatched propaganda squads equipped with Leicas to the Warsaw ghetto to record behaviour of the city's 'degenerate' Jews.

Moral fine line

Many German companies were entangled with the heinous Nazi regime. Vehicle manufacturer BMW transformed from a mobility company to an armaments firm and became one of the most important enterprises operating in Germany. From 1937, Daimler-Benz AG increasingly produced armament items such as truck and aircraft engines. Fashion designer and businessman Hugo Boss, who joined the Nazi Party in 1931, manufactured uniforms including for the SS and Hitler Youth. The intersection of business and politics is always complicated. In wartime it can be deadly. Firms must adapt, evolve and tread a moral fine line. Some, like Oskar Schindler, a German

LEITZ
ERNST LEITZ

© BERT RUPP, PHOTO ARCHIVE OF LEICA CAMERA AG / ERNST LEITZ FOUNDATION

industrialist and Nazi Party member, used their position to save lives; he is credited with rescuing 1,200 Jews.

Ernst Leitz's optics company was founded in Wetzlar, Germany, in 1869 (originally called the Optical Institute, founded by Karl Kellner in 1849) and had a tradition of enlightened policies toward its workers. The company introduced pensions, sick leave and health insurance early on, relying on a skilled workforce that included many Jewish employees. During the war, Ernst Leitz II joined the Nazi Party, necessary to maintain a public image of conformity with the Nazis. What he did before his membership remained largely untold.

History can be convoluted, embellished, distorted, entwined with error. The decisive account of Ernst Leitz II helping the persecuted is largely credited to the meticulous research of lifelong Leica user and enthusiast Rabbi, Dr Frank Dabba Smith. Born in 1955 in California he earned his first degree at the University of California at Berkeley. After working as a freelance photographer and teacher, he trained to be a Liberal Rabbi at Leo Baeck College in London and served at Harrow & Wembley Progressive Synagogue from 1997 to 2019. He holds MA degrees in Hebrew and Jewish studies as well as in Photographic Studies.

His first essay of what he tentatively knew on the topic was translated and published in academic journals in the UK in 1999 and in Germany in 2000. More recently, his PhD dissertation at University College London is titled *Ernst Leitz of Wetzlar: Helping the Persecuted*. Frank first discovered Leitz's story through a brief mention in a photography magazine. He painstakingly began to research stories of those rescued, through photographs, documents of descendants, interviews and assistance from the grandson of Ernst Leitz II, Dr Knut Kühn-Leitz.

Risk

Visitors to Ernst Leitz Hotel in Wetzlar are greeted by a large pointillist portrait of Ernst Leitz II and the phrase: Ich entscheide hiermit, es wird riskiert ('I decide that we take the risk'). This statement originally referred to his decision to develop the Leica camera but it also reflects his moral stance in helping Jewish employees escape Nazi Germany.

Shortly after Hitler was appointed Chancellor of Germany in 1933, Leitz II, then in his 60s, began receiving requests from Jewish employees for help to escape. As non-Jews, the Leitz family were not subject to the Nuremberg Laws, which restricted Jewish citizens and limited their professional activities. At great personal risk, Ernst Leitz II and his senior managers conceived plans to relocate Jewish employees to company offices abroad, primarily New York, but wherever Leitz had contacts.

To qualify for exit visas, the travellers (some who reportedly had never worked for Leitz) were designated as technicians, sales representatives, store display personnel, camera demonstrators. Leitz paid for their transport and they were paid a stipend until they could find work. Reports suggest Edith Katzenstein, having received her training at Leica, left Germany and went on to run the *Picture Post* darkroom in London. She later ran her own darkroom, where photographic luminaries such as Henri Cartier-Bresson and Patrick Lichfield were among her clients.

Robert Sternberg left Wetzlar with Ernst Leitz II providing an introduction to the Ensign Camera Company in London. The to-whom-it-may-concern reference reads, 'We hereby confirm that Herr Robert Sternberg, born in Limburg on 19 January 1914, has been employed by us since 6 April 1933, firstly in our Research Department and then in the Projection, Micro-calibration, Micro-photo, Mineralogy and Leica Repair department.' Sternberg invented the Ilford Witness camera (much prized by collectors for its sophistication and rarity).

Far left: Ernst Leitz II

Above: Leica factory in Wetzlar

Below: Ernst Leitz II with children Elsie, Ernst III, and Ludwig (c.1910-11)

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PHOTO COURTESY OF LEICA CAMERA AG

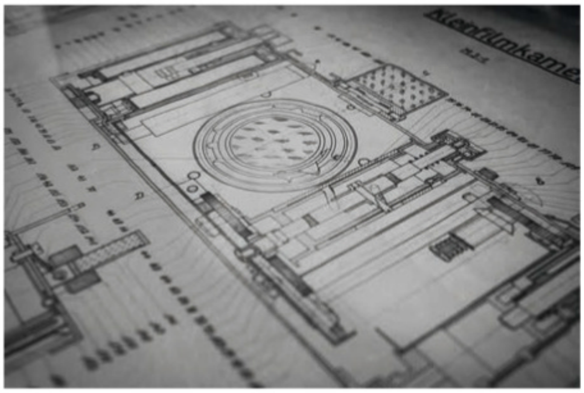
Hans Heinrich Ehrenfeld (later Henry Enfield), co-owned a major Leica distribution store in Germany. Facing persecution, he approached Leitz in August 1938 for advice on liquidating his assets and relocating. He arrived in New York on 4 March 1939 with his wife and his youngest son, later joined by his older son. He established a new camera store in Miami Beach, modelling it after his Frankfurt business.

The most well-documented biography of a Leica refugee belongs to camera mechanic Kurt Rosenberg. When Kurt was 16 his father enrolled him in a four-year apprenticeship at the Leitz plant. He emigrated to America in 1938, arriving in New York in February. Later he joined the US Army in 1943 but was tragically killed in April 1944 when the troopship *SS Paul Hamilton* was torpedoed by German aircraft in the Mediterranean. Of the 580 men aboard, just one body was recovered.

After Kristallnacht (the Night of Broken Glass) on 9-10 November 1938, when violent attacks against Jews escalated, the evacuation efforts of Leitz and his company intensified. Firm evidence indicates that they helped to save at least 80 people.

When Germany effectively closed its borders after the invasion of Poland in 1939, the Leitz family's efforts did not cease. Elsie Kuehn-Leitz was imprisoned by the Gestapo

PHOTO COURTESY OF LEICA CAMERA AG



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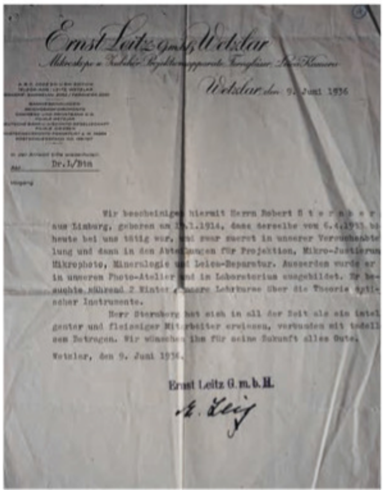


Ernst Leitz G.m.b.H. Wetzlar

Wetzlar, den 9. Juni 1936

Dr.L/Btm

Wir bescheinigen hiermit Herrn Robert S t e r n b e r
aus Limburg, geboren am [illegible].1.1914, dass derselbe vom 6.4.1933 bi
heute bei uns tätig war, und zwar zuerst in unserer Versuchsabte
lung und dann in den Abteilungen für Projektion, Mikro-Justierun
Mikrophoto, Mineralogie und Leica-Reparatur. Ausserdem wurde er
in unserem Photo-Atelier und im Laboratorium ausgebildet. Er besuchte während 2 Winter unsere Lehrkurse über die Theorie optischer Instrumente.

Herr Sternberg hat sich in all der Zeit als ein intel
genter und fleissiger Mitarbeiter erwiesen, verbunden mit tadell
sem Betragen. Wir wünschen ihm für seine Zukunft alles Gute.

Wetzlar, den 9. Juni 1936.

Ernst Leitz G.m.b.H.

E. Leitz

© STERNBERG FAMILY

© FRANK DABBA SMITH

after being caught helping Jewish woman Hedwig Palm cross into Switzerland. Though she was eventually released, she endured harsh treatment. In 1943, she also risked her life advocating for better living conditions for 700 to 800 Ukrainian slave labourers assigned to work at the Leitz factory.

Ernst Leitz II deliberately chose not to publicise his rescue efforts, believing that good deeds should be done without seeking recognition. By keeping his actions secret, he also protected himself and those he saved from Nazi retribution. Even within his family, the full story only became widely known after the last family members from that era passed away.

After the war, Elsie Kuehn-Leitz received multiple honours for her humanitarian work, including the Officier d'Honneur des Palmes Académiques from France in 1965 and the Aristide Briand Medal from the European Academy in the 1970s.

The phrase, 'Leica Freedom Train' is attributed to amateur historian of photography, George Gilbert and synonymous with the Leitz family heroic deeds.

The story is a testament to the courage of the Leitz family during one of history's darkest periods. By leveraging their resources, influence, and ingenuity, they saved many lives from the horrors of the Holocaust. Though lesser known than some, their story remains a powerful reminder of how ordinary people, motivated by empathy and justice, can make a lasting difference in the face of evil.

© STERNBERG FAMILY

F. EHRENFELD
© JILL ENFIELD

© MICHAEL AGEL

Left top and middle: Employees at Leitz

Far left, below: Kleinfilmkamera M3.1

Left, below: Letter of recommendation for Robert Sternberg signed by EL II

Above: Ernst Michael Leitz, grandson of Ernst Leitz II (left) and Peter Karbe, head of Lens Design at Leica Camera AG, in front of a picture of the M3 assembly line, 1950s

Right, middle: Robert Sternberg and his wife Joan Jary

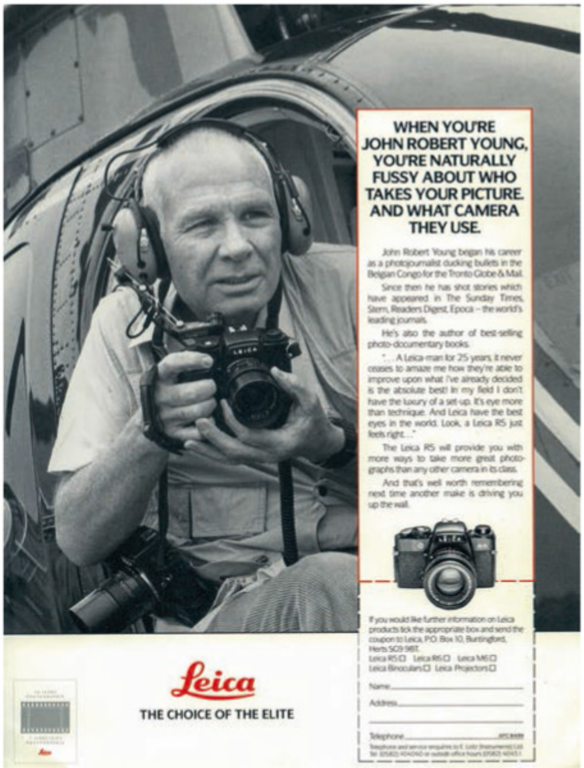
Right, below: Haus-Heinrich Ehrenfeld's shop in Frankfurt-am-Main where he sold Leica cameras

Far right: Rabbi Frank Dabba Smith (2024)

© JOHN ROBERT YOUNG

Barnack to Bach

For over five decades, freelance photojournalist John Robert Young travelled the world with his Leicas, documenting everything from war, famine and devastation to politicians, actors, artists, and musicians. **Peter Dench** finds out more



WHEN YOU'RE JOHN ROBERT YOUNG, YOU'RE NATURALLY FUSSY ABOUT WHO TAKES YOUR PICTURE. AND WHAT CAMERA THEY USE.

John Robert Young began his career as a photojournalist ducking bullets in the Belgian Congo for the Tronto Globe & Mail.

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THE CHOICE OF THE ELITE

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The neat package that arrived from a village near Lewes, East Sussex, contained the book *Toothbrush, Passport & Camera: Diary of a Photojournalist* by John Robert Young. Blending memoir and travelogue, it delivers a personal and professional look into his life. The book provides an intimate perspective on the challenges and rewards of the profession, giving readers insight into both the technical and human aspects of the job. He reflects on the emotional and physical toll the work can take, as well as the unique moments of connection with people from all walks of life.

Inside the book was a gift of two of John's black & white prints: one of a father dying from starvation with his daughter at a remote clinic in the mountains of Ethiopia (1980), and another of model and actor Joanna Lumley, 1976. The subjects are antipodal. The choice of camera is consistent – Leica. For most of his career, they were inseparable. John describes taking the photograph in Ethiopia, 'My reason for being there was to take pictures and as callous as this may seem, that is exactly what I did. As I looked through my viewfinder at this pitiful scene, I could only pray that in some way my pictures would stir hearts and emotions in affluent countries so people would donate more aid… As I reloaded my Leicas, my eyes were damp with sorrow.'

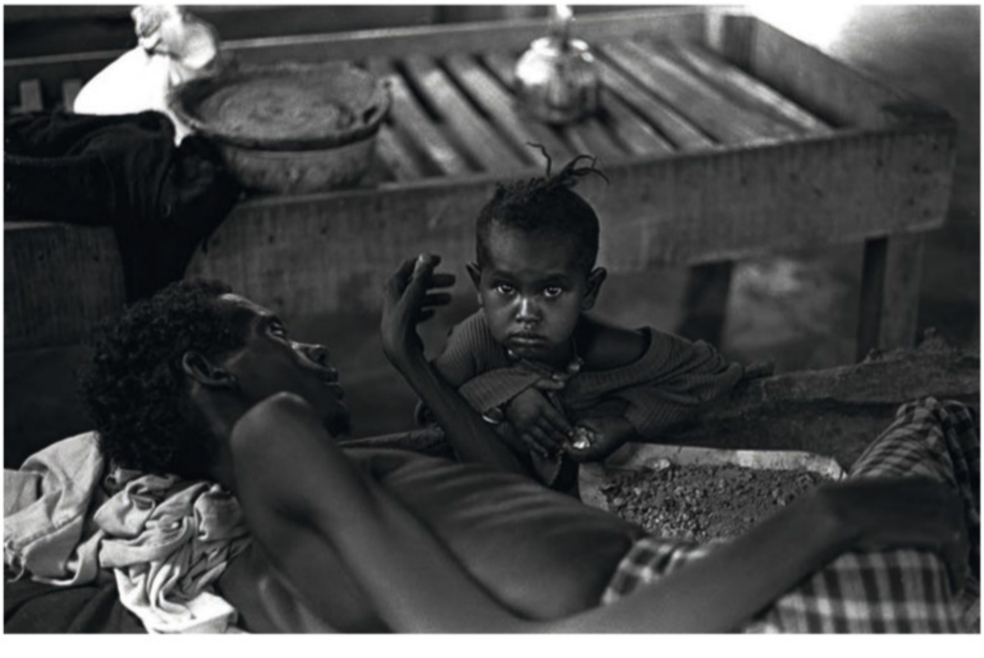
Those two prints are synonymous with John's freelance career – contrasting. He researched and funded global stories, then sold them to renowned publications such as *Stern, Epoca, Grands Reportages, The Sunday Times Magazine, The New York Times*, and *The Toronto Globe and Mail*. John has a long relationship with Canada and is a naturalised Canadian, having lived and worked there for a number of years. As a freelancer, his agent secured accreditation from *The Globe & Mail* and sponsorship from private businesses to document the civil war in the Congo and the end of colonialism in Africa.

He risked his life reporting in

Left: Joanna Lumley

Above: Young, photographed for a Leica advertisement

Below: Ethiopian child with his father, 1980



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Left: Young photographing a People's Liberation Army tank division who are clapping a welcome for him, China

Below: Young in China for his book on the People's Liberation Army, seen here with a tank division

© JOHN ROBERT YOUNG

unstable and unpredictable environments and nearly died from leishmaniasis after being bitten by a sandfly in French Guiana. He nearly became a priest. As John developed as a photojournalist and familiarised himself with the world, Zimbabwe was still Rhodesia, and Palestine was morphing into Israel. By the end, he was one of the last of a breed of photojournalists.

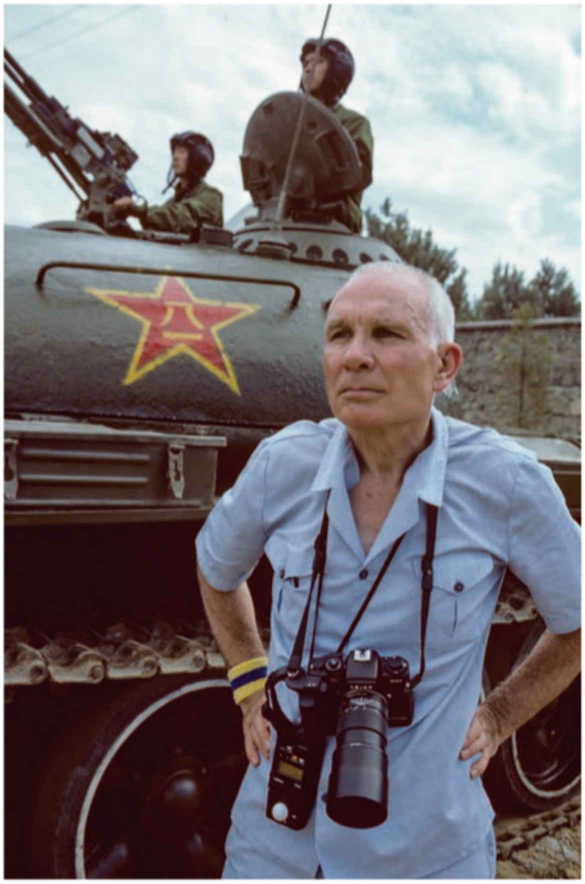
John's upbringing was fractured. His parents split when he was in his mid-teens. He then lived with his mother in the tired seaside resort of Selsey. The divorce wasn't messy, the effect was still profound. With National Service looming, John's career in photography began at The Chichester Photographic Service in Whyke Lane. John remembers, 'A street of modest family homes, whose residents judged the time of day from the passing trains at the end of the street.' Sometimes, it was so cold in the building that he wore mittens. Cameras were placed near the stove with their backs open to keep the shutters functioning.

Under the tutorship of Harry 'Mr G' Guermonprez, John went from sweeping the floor and making tea to helping in the darkroom – drying and trimming film, developing prints, and making deliveries and collections on an aging Raleigh bicycle. He got the chance to handle his first press camera at a double wedding at nearby Bosham Church.

He was dismissed after peeking inside a box Mr G had instructed him to destroy if he failed to return from a medical operation. The yellow Kodak box contained very blue photographs of a female employee. Mr G survived the operation but not the embarrassment of knowing what John must've witnessed. He explained, 'It's just not working out, old boy. I can't see you having any future in this business.' To put it mildly, Mr G was wrong.

Eye-opening

John became the official photographer for, among others, two Prime Ministers – one Canadian, one British. He gained access to the People's Liberation Army of China, had lunch with Hitler's filmmaker Leni Riefenstahl, and tiptoed into the fashion world of London during the swinging sixties. His experience in the film industry was eye-



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opening: 'I came across some of the most devious characters on Earth during my time working in the film industry, including fraudsters, conmen, vagabonds of one kind or another, chancers, together with some of the world's most beautiful women. However, my job was to make the stars look great and that's exactly what I did.'

In Bogotá, Colombia, John was contacted by a local politician deeply concerned about the domestic and industrial pollution of the Bogotá River and associated health problems, including babies born with horrific congenital deformities. John's exposé was published in *The Sunday Times* supplement and helped pressure the government to begin a cleanup of the river.

John was one of the few photographers granted access to document the daily life of Nobel Peace Prize winner Dr Albert Schweitzer (1875–1965) at his hospital in Lambaréné, Gabon. His photographs capture Schweitzer mingling with families living on the hospital grounds, travelling to a leper colony he established and working in his study. (This series, along with his Africa coverage, was shot with a Nikon SP camera and a 200mm Takumar lens on a Pentax, popular equipment at the time.)

© JOHN ROBERT YOUNG

© JOHN ROBERT YOUNG

Above: Children playing in the polluted River Bogotá

Left: French Foreign legionnaires on patrol, battle to get their raft over the rapids on the River Oyapock, Guyana

Below: A French Foreign legionnaire prepares for the day, early morning in a raft on the River Oyapock

Embedded with the Legion

Joining forces with his Leicas, John produced *French Foreign Legion: The Inside Story of the World Famous Fighting Force* (Thames & Hudson, 1984), arguably the most defining visual account of the elite, secretive military unit that accepts foreign recruits under an assumed name.

John writes, 'For more than two years in the 1980s, without any constraints whatsoever, I became embedded with the Legion for the sole purpose of producing a documentary in the form of a picture book, long before it became part of everyday language.' He continues, 'Baffling as the Legion may be, they decided the time was right for their story to be told, and with my former colonial police credentials [he served in the Palestine Police at the time of the British Mandate and later in the Colonial Police in Southern Rhodesia], I appeared to be the right person at the right time to be allowed into their secret, all-male society.'

His intimate colour photographs capture Legionaries eating in their mess hall, abseiling in the high peaks of Corsica, positioning their rifle in snow drifts on the French Alps, scrambling under barbed wire at the French Army's Commando Training School near Andorra, in a mechanised patrol crossing the desert south of the Gulf of Tadjoura, Djibouti and on a mission deep in the jungle of French Guiana. The book also focuses on the Legion as a family. Recruits have relinquished their old life including family and friends. It was in the top ten for non-fiction books in the UK, translated into several languages, and sold over 100,000 copies worldwide.

It wasn't a smooth journey. Backed by *The Telegraph Magazine*, John had previously been invited to photograph at the Legion's headquarters in Aubagne, Provence. The story was a disaster. The lead picture in the magazine was obtained from a French picture

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agency, only four of John's were used, his credit was minute. Frustrated but emboldened, he wrote to French President Mitterrand for help. As always, unwaveringly backed by his wife Jenny, they put their house on the market to raise funds. The letter was well received, les boules were in motion, the gamble paid off. An exhibition and reception for the book's publication was held at Les Invalides in Paris, attended by the Minister of Defence and the officers with whom he had worked.

Shooting the Foreign Legion, around 300 rolls of film were wound through his Leica R3 and R4, M3 and Leicaflex SL2. He purchased his first Leica in Jerusalem – a model 1 with a fixed 50mm 2.5 Hektor lens. A small Leitz rangefinder which fitted on the shoe of the camera came with the camera. John's love of the Leica was reciprocal. When his gear was stolen while on assignment in Spain, Leica UK assisted with replacement cameras and lenses.

Leica man

In the late 1980s, Leica UK director Uli Hintner invited John to endorse the brand through a series of national press advertisements with the tagline – Leica: The Choice Of The Elite. John says, 'I had already established a good relationship with Leica UK through my role as a personal photographer to Shirley MacLaine, who used my Leica M2 in the TV series, *Shirley's World*. I believe it was the diversity of my work that gave them maximum exposure for their product. Wherever I went in the world my Leica cameras went with me. I was then privileged to have use of the finest cameras and lenses available at the time.'

In one advert he leans from a helicopter wearing ear mufflers, cradling an R5, the copy reads, '… A Leica-man for 25 years, it never ceases to amaze me how they're able to improve upon what I've already decided is the absolute best! In my field I don't have the luxury of a set-up. It's more than technique. And Leica have the best eyes in the world. Look, a Leica R5 just feels right…' In another, John is pictured in hat and heavy coat leaning from an ice-crusted vehicle with an R6, 'It's a beautifully simple camera… and when I'm thousands of miles away, reliability in all weather conditions is important: even when I was above latitude 60°N and working in freezing rain with the wind-chill factor plunging temperatures to minus 20°C, my R6 continued working throughout. Simple? Yes. Reliable? Undeniably. Improved? Yes – unbelievable, but true.'

This year, Jenny and John will celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary and, all being well, John's 97th birthday. Forty miles from where it all began in Whyke Lane, John still takes photos with his Leicas and makes his own prints. If you pass by their home you may hear him playing a 1787 violin from the Klotz family of violin makers.

The oeuvre of John's work always has people at its core and serves as a historical document capturing stories in time from different parts of the world. Not bad for a lad from the back streets of industrial Yorkshire.

© JOHN ROBERT YOUNG

Above, left: Pilgrims at the Via Dolorosa

Above: French foreign legion recruits

Left: Young with his Leica in Hong Kong

Below: Young (right) guest speaker at the Leica Society with David Suchet. Photo ©Don Jacklin

© DON JACKLIN

Amateur Photographer

Festival of Outdoor Photography

FRIDAY 30 MAY - SUNDAY 1 JUNE | ROYAL GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY, LONDON

Join us for a three-day celebration of outdoor photography at the Royal Geographical Society in London's historic museum district of South Kensington. This festival brings together an incredible selection of world-class experts who will share their knowledge and passion through talks, presentations, workshops, and interactive events.

Whether you're an experienced photographer looking to refine your skills or a budding enthusiast eager to explore everything the world of outdoor photography has to offer, there's something for everyone. Each day will be packed with inspiring sessions, covering a wide range of expertise and interests.

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Get your early bird tickets now!

Leica through their lens

Three photographers, three journeys, one shared passion – capturing the world with Leica. From the wild landscapes of explorers to the intimate moments of daily life, discover how **Levison Wood**, **Lucy Laucht**, and **Emily Garthwaite** see the world through their Leica cameras

Levison Wood

Levison Wood is a British explorer, author, and photographer renowned for his extensive expeditions, including walking the length of the Nile, the Himalayas, the Americas and beyond. His book *Encounters: A Photographic Journey* showcases his photography from all corners of the globe, capturing the diverse cultures and landscapes he's experienced. Levison has been using Leica cameras to document his travels for over a decade. Visit **www.levisonwood.com** and Instagram **@levison.wood**

My camera has been an integral companion on my journeys, capturing the diverse cultures and landscapes that define my adventures. My relationship with Leica began in 2014 during my Walking the Nile expedition, when I needed a camera that could withstand the relentless heat, dust, and rain of a month's-long journey on foot. I invested in my very first Leica, the M240, a rugged and beautifully crafted machine that quickly became as essential as my hiking boots.

Since that first expedition, I have proudly been a Leica ambassador, and their cameras have accompanied me across deserts, jungles, and conflict zones. Today, I primarily use the Leica SL3 paired with the Vario-Elmarit-SL 24-70 f/2.8 lens. Its robust build and weather-sealing give me confidence in environments that would compromise lesser equipment, whether I'm navigating the dense jungles of Central America or crossing the sands of Arabia. The image quality is second to none, and the glass – true to Leica's legendary reputation – is astonishingly sharp.

Shooting in low light is always a test. When I'm capturing the glow of firelight on a tribal elder's face or the last embers of a desert sunset, precision is everything. Leica's design keeps things simple. No excess buttons, no distractions – just an intuitive interface that lets me respond to whatever's in front of me. In those moments, speed matters. The difference between a great photo and a missed opportunity is often just a fraction of a second.

Photography, for me, is an extension of storytelling. Whether I'm trekking across the Caucasus, riding horseback through Afghanistan, or tracing the migration paths of elephants in Botswana, my Leica is always within reach, ready to document the raw, unscripted moments and unfiltered humanity that define these places.

Some of my favourite photographs aren't the most technically perfect – they're the ones with a story behind them. In Sri Lanka, I watched stilt fishermen silhouetted against the dawn light. It's a dying tradition, one that's now more commonly performed for tourists than for food since the 2004 tsunami altered many shorelines. But on that morning, just south of Cape Weligama, I saw it as it once was. The elderly fisherman's balance, his patience, the rhythmic dip of his pole into the water for

Mundari Cattle Camp (2014): Amid South Sudan's turmoil, I captured a serene moment at a Mundari cattle camp where resilient pastoral life endures even as conflict rages

ALL PICTURES ON PAGES 64-65 © LEVISON WOOD

Dhofar Ridge (2017): The Jibbali people have lived in the crags and caves of this isolated escarpment for hundreds of years. Most of the locals now live in the towns, but a few hardy camel herders remain committed to following the ancient trails and footsteps of their forefathers

hours before returning with a bucketful of fish for his family. Leica lets me capture that honesty without intruding.

In South Sudan, during my journey along the Nile, I spent time with the Mundari people, who live among their prized cattle. They rely on them for everything – milk, blood, even warmth at night as they sleep beside them in the open air. One morning, as the smoke from burning dung fires drifted through the air, I captured an image of light rays shining onto the camp as a young boy tended to a fire. That photo sits on my wall to this day. It reminds me why I do this – to document resilience, adaptation, and survival in places that too often go unseen.

The design of Leica cameras makes you think about composition and what you're trying to say. It's not about firing off a hundred shots, it's about patience and seeing rather than just looking. My Leica is with me to help capture the extraordinary in the ordinary.

Stilt Fisherman (2015): At dawn near Cape Weligama, I watched one elderly man sit for four hours perched on his stilt and returned with a bucketful of fish for his family

Right: Close Encounter (2023): On Greenland's remote east coast, I experienced a fleeting, profound encounter with a polar bear. The Arctic is warming up four times faster than anywhere else on Earth and these incredible animals are losing their habitats

Left: Levison with his camera

LEVISON'S TOP TIPS

1 Shoot with Intent: Slow down and truly compose your frame. Whether you're traversing remote landscapes or navigating busy city streets, each shot should have a purpose and tell its own story.

2 Embrace Manual Focus: Mastering manual focus forces you to be present. Relying on your own judgment rather than autofocus helps you connect with your subject and enhances your overall awareness of the scene.

3 Harness Available Light: Leica lenses excel in low-light situations. Don't shy away from pushing your ISO settings to capture the warmth of street lamps, the glow of firelight, or even the subtle luminance of moonlit scenes. This approach can transform ordinary moments into atmospheric narratives.

4 Stay Curious: Most of my most unforgettable images have come from unplanned encounters. Engage with your environment, talk to people, and let genuine interactions shape your photography. Sometimes the most powerful shots emerge from moments you never expected.

5 Trust Your Instincts: When something catches your eye, follow that impulse. The best photographs often come from those split-second decisions and unguarded moments of spontaneity.

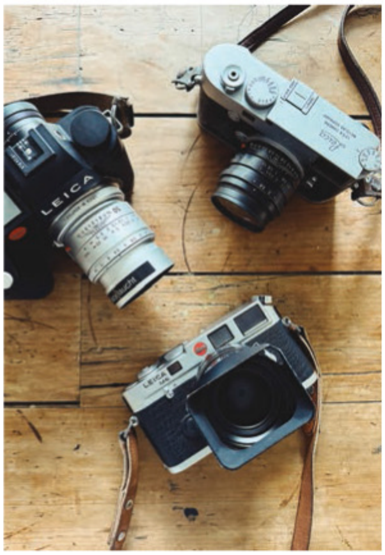
6 Keep It Simple: A Leica paired with a couple of versatile lenses is all you need. Avoid overcomplicating your setup so you can focus on the scene in front of you. It's all about the story unfolding before your eyes.

7 Respect Your Subjects: When photographing people, especially in different cultural contexts, always approach with respect and sensitivity. Building rapport with your subjects can lead to more authentic and compelling portraits.

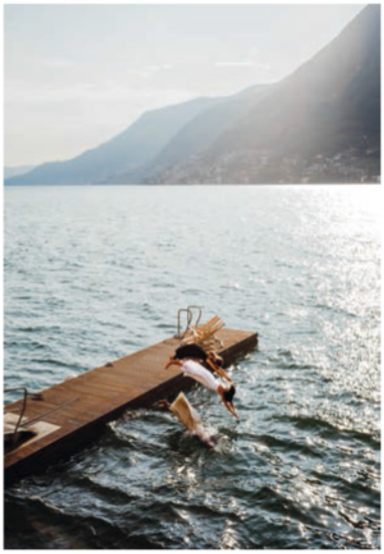
8 Be Patient and Observant: Great photography often requires patience. Spend time observing your environment and subjects before pressing the shutter.

Lucy Laucht

Lucy Laucht is a British photographer known for her naturalistic, intimate approach. Her work has an evocative, filmic quality and her images portray everyday moments with an emphasis on light, colour and sense of place.
www.lucylaucht.com, @lucylaucht



Lucy's Leica kit



Lake Como divers, shot on the Leica M10-P with the 50mm Summilux

My father was a photographer and developed his black & white film photographs in a small dark room in the attic of our family home. On summer holidays we were given little disposable cameras to document our adventures; I would frame up scenes through the viewfinder long after the film was spent. These experiences had a lasting influence on shaping my work and visual language.

I'm drawn to capturing the warmth and beauty in simple, fleeting moments with a documentary-style eye, blending fashion, travel, and personal narrative. Most recently I published my first book, *Il Dolce Far Niente*, an observation of who we are beside the sea, at play.

My first Leica was an M10P; a camera that fits me like a glove. Should I find myself washed up on a desert island in the future I would hope the M10P with a 50mm Summilux is in my dry bag.

More recently I've added a Leica n SL3 as my commercial workhorse camera, primarily for the autofocus and crisp resolution. For some projects I favour SL lenses with autofocus, but mostly I find myself adapting my SL3 with a Summilux M 50mm lens. This combination allows me to photograph intentionally; I find that the images have a slightly filmic, atmospheric quality which comes from a soft focus here and there.

LUCY'S TOP TIPS

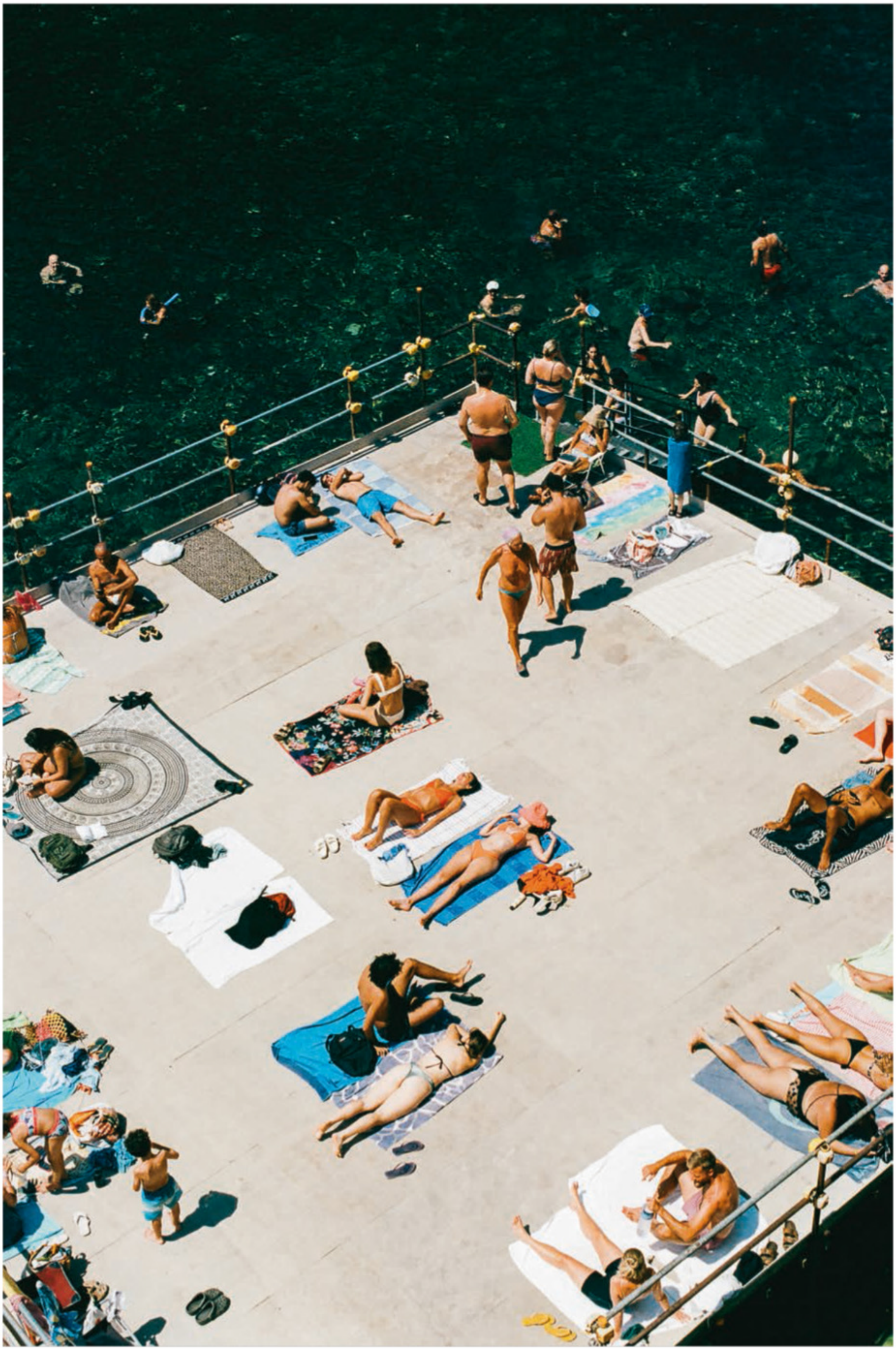
1 Develop your Personal Style: Spend time and intention developing your personal visual style and narrative. The most wonderful thing about photography – and any creative pursuit – is that only you can make the work. Find what your eye is drawn to, follow what you love and practice, practice, practice. Seek inspiration in photobooks, galleries and film, rather than scrolling the internet for reference.

2 Understand Light: For me, light is the most important piece of the puzzle especially because I like my work to have a warm, nostalgic sensibility. I favour sunrise and sunset for soft light. If I'm making a portrait during the day when the light is typically hard, I will place my subject inside near a window, which I'll sometimes diffuse with a silk if the light is too strong.

3 Take your Camera Everywhere: A lesson I learn repeatedly is to carry a camera everywhere. Nothing haunts you like the photograph you were unable to take. My M10 and M6 are nimble and less intimidating than larger SLRs, perfect for candid street photography. If I'm shooting travel I might use the aperture priority setting, allowing the camera to handle the exposure balance so I can focus on my subject and composition.

Far left: A quiet moment in the Aeolian Islands, shot on Leica M6 with the 50mm Summilux

Left: Puglia, shot on Leica M6 with the 50mm Summilux



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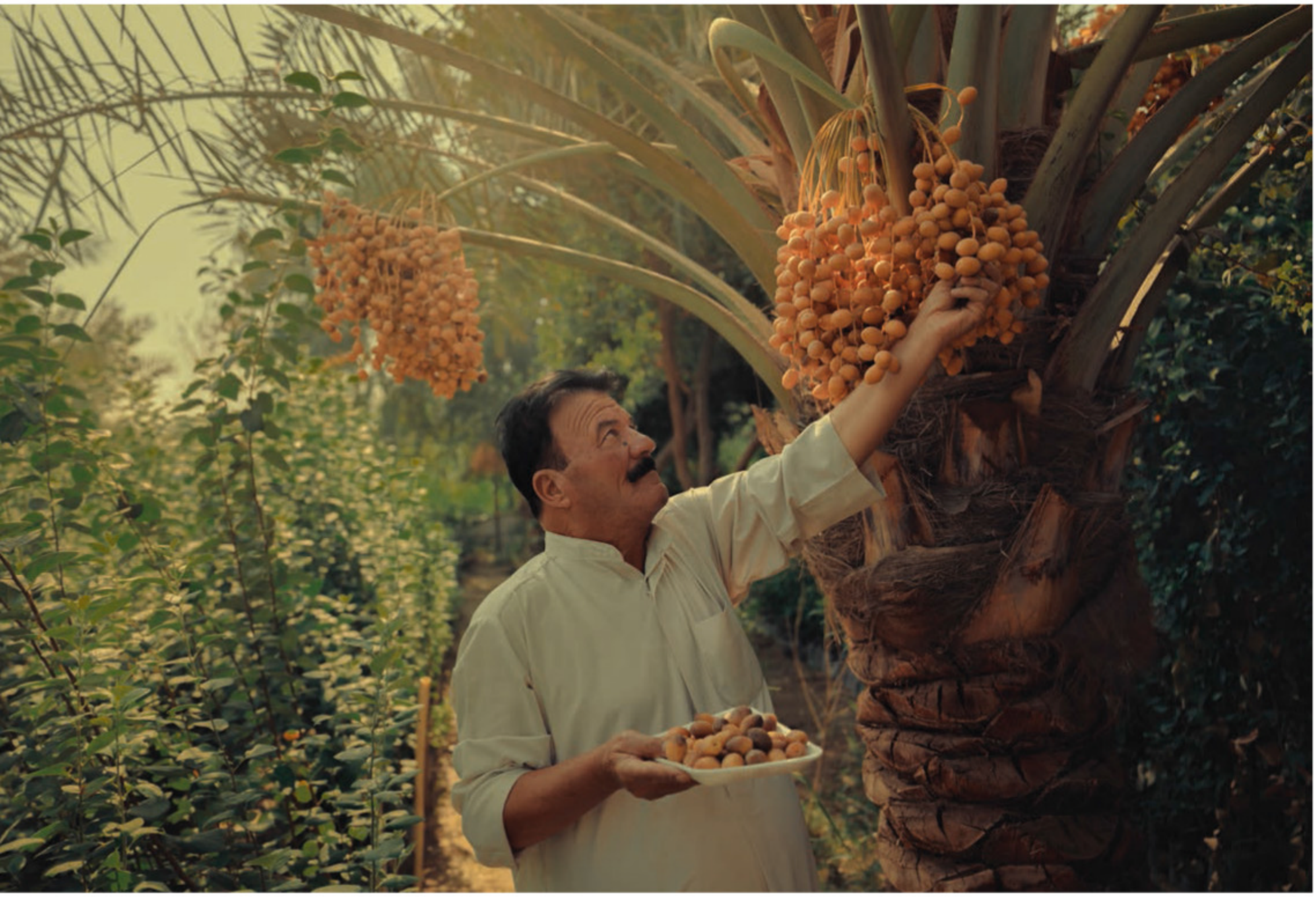
Left: Ortigia, Sicily, shot on Leica M6 with the 50mm Summilux



© EMILY GARTHWAITE/NEW YORK TIMES

Emily Garthwaite

Emily Garthwaite (b. 1993) is a photojournalist, writer and storyteller focusing on environmental and humanitarian stories. Emily's work weaves together themes of shared humanity, displacement and coexistence with the natural world. She is a Leica Ambassador with a Masters in Documentary Photography and Photojournalism from the University of Westminster. See **www.emilygarthwaite.com** and **Instagram @emilygarthwaite**

I've used the Leica systems for ten years and began with the Leica M240, carrying a 35mm lens for all my assignments. I continued with the M systems for some years, covering stories across Iraq, Iran, Ethiopia, and the UK. I then introduced a vintage Leica 50mm f/2.8 Elmar from 1959, which I still use today because the bokeh is incredibly painterly.

I currently carry in my kit the Leica SL2 with a Leica 28mm f/2 APO-Summicron-SL ASPH, a backup Leica SL2 body, and have newly introduced the Leica M11-P with a Summilux-M 28 f/1.4 ASPH. I have a Leica Summilux SL 50mm F/1.4 ASPH, but it's a heavy lens, and I reserve it for portraits.

It became clear that simplicity – one camera, one prime lens – was the way for me to work at the highest level. It's also much lighter. As a photojournalist, I'm on the move a lot and don't want the extra weight! I've never used a zoom lens and love the restrictions of a 28mm. With restrictions, I can push the equipment to the edge.

A lot of people are understandably nervous in front of the camera, so a compact and discreet camera like the Leica M11 allows me to connect more simply. Most importantly, both cameras have quiet shutters, so I can photograph candidly without disturbing the scene!

Above: Abu Rafat picks dates in his garden centre which resides on Baghdad's green belt, Iraq

Over the past ten years, my eye and understanding of the world have developed with my Leica equipment. I have grown up with Leica systems since I was 21 years old. Through my Leica kit, I have developed an aesthetic that emphasises natural or available light and rich tonality, and Leica has played a considerable role in nurturing my creative eye.

Ultimately, the craftsmanship of the camera allows me to focus solely on what's in front of me and the stories I care about. All I then have to do is trust my intuition and adapt to changing conditions.

Bassam al-Sheikh, an environmental activist, stands amongst reed beds on the banks of the Tigris River in Mosul, Iraq

© EMILY GARTHWAITE

© EMILY GARTHWAITE

A boy travels by boat along a canal in Abu Khaseeb, a village in southern Iraq affected by decades of conflict. Abu Khaseeb, a once-thriving village south of Basra, is in the eye of the climate storm.

EMILY'S TOP TIPS

1 Vintage Glass: Consider vintage glass for a painterly feel. I like to visit independent Leica dealerships to explore some of the Leica vintage lenses. I use an M adapter, which opens up a whole world of lens options.

2 Focusing: Don't be precious about keeping your photos perfectly in focus.

3 Restrictions are Good: When I started with street photography, I'd take out one camera and one lens. I'd try a 50mm for a week or so and switch to a 35mm. Each lens offers a different way of seeing the world. And I find less is more. Lugging heavy kit around is terrible for your bag, for getting somewhere quickly – and for easily engaging with strangers!

4 Try a 28mm: All my photos are taken on a 28mm. I find it to be an incredibly versatile lens.

© EMILY GARTHWAITE

© EMILY GARTHWAITE

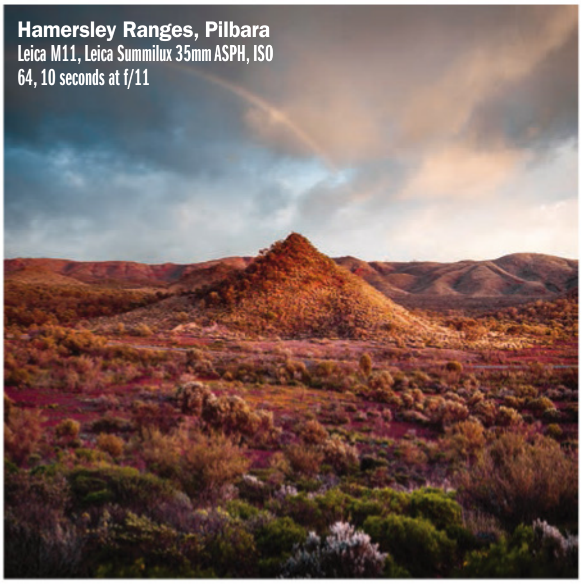
Above: Four sisters plait each other's hair in the town of Kut. Their father is a fisherman and one of many in the area seeing dwindling catches.

Left: In the summer, temperatures reach upwards of 50°C in Iraq. For farmers and shepherds, their only option is to bathe their flock in the soupy, warm waters of the Tigris to cool them down.

The Leica effect

Christian Fletcher

Christian Fletcher is a landscape photographer, but he also has an interest in contemporary urban scenes and graphic minimalism. In 2011 the Australian Institute of Professional Photography awarded him both the Western Australian and the Australian Professional Landscape Photographer of The Year titles. His images are on display at his art gallery in Dunsborough, Australia. **www.christianfletcher.com.au**



Hamersley Ranges, Pilbara
Leica M11, Leica Summilux 35mm ASPH, ISO 64, 10 seconds at f/11

© CHRISTIAN FLETCHER

Please describe your preferred subject matter
First and foremost, I'm a landscape photographer, but my work over the past three decades has been extremely varied. I'm interested in industrial and urban photography, and I've been making images with these themes since 2010.

What is your favourite Leica camera/ lens combination?
For the past few years, I've been shooting with Leicas SL cameras – I'm currently using the SL3. When combined with the APO-Summicron-SL 50 f/2 ASPH it's possibly the best setup I've used. The images are sharp, detailed and they have that 'Leica look'.

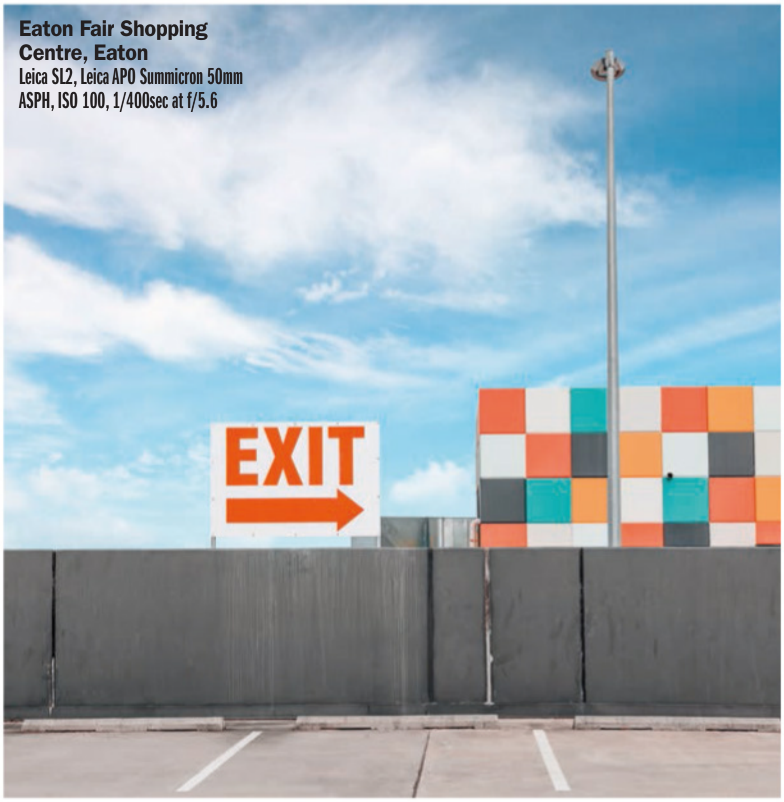
What attracted you to the Leica brand?
I've always been attracted to cameras that are pieces of art, but they need to be optically excellent and reliable too. As such, I only had a few choices when it came to cameras that fit the bill. Phase One, Hasselblad and Leica. When looking at the capabilities of each camera, the Leica was the best overall match for me.

Name one item (aside from a camera) that every photographer should own?
A Lamborghini. Unfortunately, on a photographer's wage this is out of reach for most of us! Joking aside, I couldn't be without my large-format Epson printers.

What is your worst photographic habit?
Laziness. If I don't have to get out of the car to take a picture, I won't. Most of my urban photography is taken this way! I use the car as a tripod, moving forwards and reversing to get the composition I desire.

What single thing would improve your photography?
More motivation to go that extra mile. After 35 years it's easy to do what I've always done. It would be good to push myself out of my comfort zone more.

What features would your dream Leica have?
It would be the size of an iPhone, weigh nothing, have a medium format sensor, shoot 100MP and feature a vast dynamic range. It would have image stabilisation that removes the need for a tripod and the lens would be sharp wide open with a focal range of 14-600mm. Ultimately though it isn't the camera that takes the photo, it's the photographer.



Eaton Fair Shopping Centre, Eaton
Leica SL2, Leica APO Summicron 50mm ASPH, ISO 100, 1/400sec at f/5.6

© CHRISTIAN FLETCHER

KIT LIST

Leica SL3

With a 60-megapixel sensor and a dynamic range of up to 15 stops, it's easy to see why the Leica SL3 is Christian's current camera of choice.

Leica APO-Summicron-SL 50 f/2 ASPH

The Leica APO-Summicron-SL 50 f/2 ASPH lens is sharp wide open and offers fast, precise, almost silent autofocus.

The craftsmanship, design and reliability of Leica cameras and lenses attracts thousands of photographers to the brand, but the company's dedication to the medium's history is also a big draw. **Tracy Calder** asks five ambassadors why they love Leica

© KNOX BERTIE

© SIMON OZOLINS

Knox Bertie

Knox Bertie lives and works in Sydney, Australia. His images focus on the relationship between people and the urban environment. He is currently working on a body of work called Anicca. Knox is running a number of workshops this year – details can be found at **leica-akademie.com.au.** You can see more of his work on Instagram **@knoxbertie**

Please describe your preferred subject matter
My photography is about capturing the everyday as I perceive it, rather than as it exists. I'm not a documentary photographer in the traditional sense – I don't feel the need to portray the world exactly as it is. Instead, I focus on translating how it feels to me.

What is your favourite Leica camera/ lens combination?
I gravitate toward the Leica Q cameras for their size, functionality, and discretion. It's a tough call between the Q3 43 and the Q2 Monochrom. The Q3 43's lens is flawless – it has a timeless look, and the Summicron rendering evokes a connection to Leica's photographic history. However, the Monochrom is in a class of its own. Its files have a depth and richness that can't be replicated.

What attracted you to the Leica brand?
Leica has been a part of my photographic journey from the beginning. For years, I shot exclusively on film, primarily with medium format cameras and a Leica III with a Summaron f/3.5. I still use that camera, and there's something about the images it produces that's hard to recreate with anything else. Beyond the gear, the Leica community is what sets the brand apart. The team at Leica Australia is incredible.

Name one item (aside from a camera) that every photographer should own?
A high-quality camera bag, especially for travel. I use an Oberwerth, which is expensive but well worth it.

What is your worst photographic habit?
I go through long stretches without picking up a camera. When I'm inspired, I become completely immersed and highly productive, but I struggle to maintain this consistency. Finding a way to stay creatively engaged, even when I don't feel like it, is something I'm always working on.

What single thing would improve your photography?
More time. Whenever I have the opportunity to travel and focus on photography, I see immediate growth. If I could dedicate myself fully to personal projects, I know my work would evolve significantly.

What features would your dream Leica have?
I would love a pocketable, full-frame point-and-shoot camera with the image quality and speed of the Leica Q series.

KIT LIST

Leica Q3 43

A self-described Luddite, Knox uses a Leica III from the 1930s as his main film camera, but has recently started using a Leica Q2 Monochrom, and a Leica Q3 43.

Oberwerth bag

A high-quality camera bag is invaluable for travel. Knox uses an Oberwerth bag, made of top-quality leather and CORDURA. It's both stylish and practical.

Above: Redfern Station
Leica Q2 Monochrom, Summilux 28mm f/1.7 ASPH, ISO 3200, 1/2000sec at f/16

Right: Bus Stop, Ulaanbaatar
Leica Q3 43, Summicron 43mm f/2 APO, ISO 12800, 1/125sec at f/2

© KNOX BERTIE

Feet in the Sand #01
Leica SL2-S, Leica Vario 24-70mm f/2.8, ISO 200, 1/125sec at f/8

© MARCUS BELL

Marcus Bell

Marcus Bell's images capture the beauty in people, places and moments that might otherwise go unnoticed. His ability to communicate the spirit and character of people is influenced by his life experiences. Awarded the title Grand Master of Photography by the Australian Institute of Professional Photography, he is well known globally. His work has been widely exhibited. See **www.marcusbell.com**

Kanji
Leica M11 Monochrom, Leica APO-Summicron 35mm, ISO 400, 1/250sec at f/8

© MARCUS BELL

KIT LIST

Leica SL3 with Leica 24-70mm f/2.8 Vario

Teaming a Leica SL3 with a 24-70mm lens offers Marcus the flexibility and speed he needs to capture fleeting moments. It's a combination that suits his style of photography.

Vintage lens

Much like a painter chooses the type of brush depending on the job, Marcus likes to experiment with everything from a Leica APO -Summicron-SL 35mm to a 7.3cm Hektor lens.

Please describe your preferred subject matter
I love capturing people. It doesn't matter if it's a commission or a scene that I find on the street or beach, I love having a human element in the picture.

What is your favourite Leica camera/lens combination?
I have two favourite setups: a Leica SL3 with 24-70mm f/2.8 Vario and a Leica M9 with 35mm Summicron V4. The 24-70mm focal range allows me to refine my composition easily – most of the moments I capture are fleeting, so this is ideal. I can fit both setups in a sling, which keeps things compact.

What attracted you to the Leica brand?
Everything: the quality, the feel. One of the things I admire the most is that Leica values its own history – it not only excels at modern gear, but it also has an incredible range of cameras and lenses, going back 100 years. Many of these are as relevant today as they were when they were first released. I own as many vintage Leica lenses as I do modern ones.

Name one item (aside from a camera) that every photographer should own?
A vintage lens. There are so many designs, coatings, glass elements etc, and each one offers a unique look. Some of these lenses are as sharp, if not sharper, than modern lenses, while others offer a softness that is breathtakingly beautiful.

What is your worst photographic habit?
Indecision: when I'm reviewing a project it can be tricky to decide what belongs on the cutting-room floor and what belongs in the final selection.

What single thing would improve your photography?
Photographing even more than I do. Every time I pick up a camera, I learn something new or refine what I've done before.

What features would your dream Leica have?
It would be a combination of everything I love about the SL and M bodies: it would be the size of the M with the EVF of the SL3, teamed with a 28-50mm Tri-Elmar Summicron manual focus lens. The lens would be the size of a Summicron and smaller than the existing Tri-Elmar f/4.

Jesse Marlow

Jesse Marlow is a Melbourne-based photographer. His work is held in public and private collections across Australia. He has published three books: *Centre Bounce: Football from Australia's Heart*; *Wounded*; and *Don't Just Tell Them, Show Them*. Later this year he will be leading two immersive ten-day workshops in Morocco for Leica Akademie Australia. You can see more of Jesse's work at **jessemarlow.com**

Please describe your preferred subject matter
I've produced numerous bodies of work within the street and documentary genres, but I don't really have a preferred subject matter. I like to remain open to opportunities. I love the uncertainty of working candidly on the street. If I knew what I was going to be shooting every day, I would have become bored of photography years ago. The unknown element of street photography is what continues to inspire me.

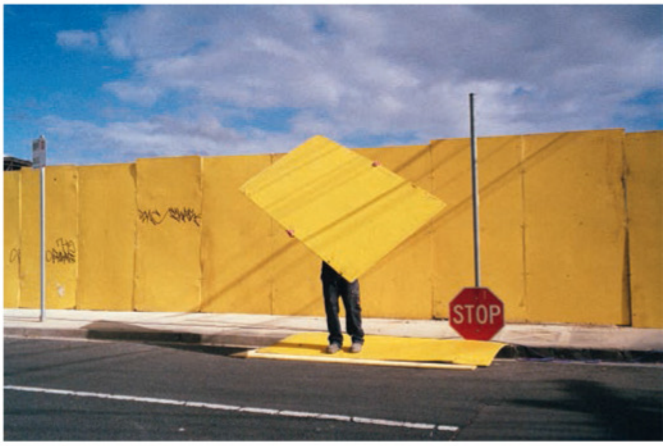
What is your favourite Leica camera?
The Leica Q. I switched from the M6 back in 2015 when the Q was released, and I have been using it ever since. I've recently been shooting with the Q3 43 and I'm loving it. The fast autofocus, size and discreet feel of the Q is great. It's a camera that never leaves my side.

What attracted you to the Leica brand?
Back in the 1990s I studied the work of Robert Frank and Henri Cartier-Bresson and it was hugely inspiring. As an impressionable young student, I simply had to have the camera my heroes used. I saved up my money for a second-hand Leica M4-P which I used for a couple of years before switching to the M6.

Name one item (aside from a camera) that every photographer should own?
A good-quality shoulder bag. I'm constantly travelling and running workshops, so having a few different-sized bags for various situations is key for me.

What is your worst photographic habit?
Forgetting to charge my camera batteries after a day's shooting and then leaving the house with an empty battery the next day.

© JESSE MARLOW



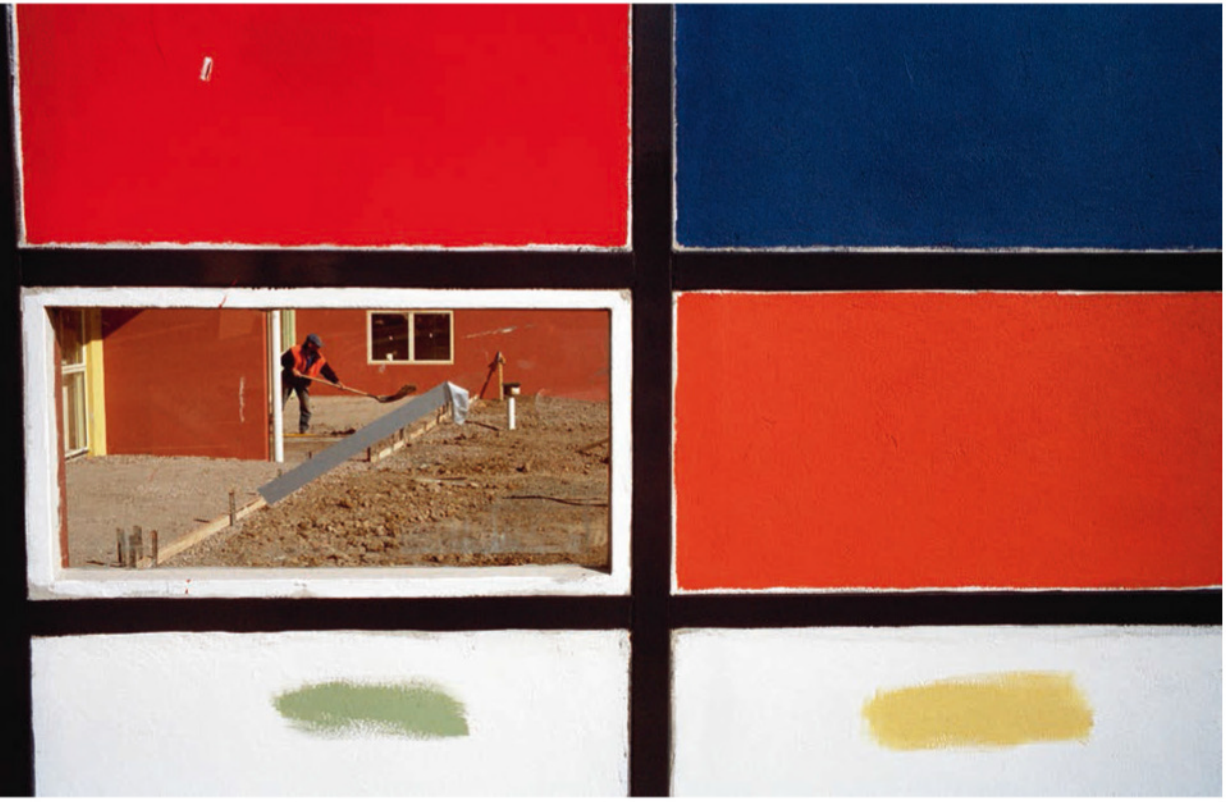
Above: Stop
Leica M6, Summicron 35mm f/2, Fuji 400 Superia, 1/100sec

What single thing would improve your photography?
As a working commercial photographer, with a personal practice, time management can be an issue. Like anything in life, the more you put in, the better the results. Photography is the perfect example of this.

What features would your dream Leica have?
A camera with a battery that never flattens would be a dream. I think another feature that I'd love to see one day is unlimited internal storage. I have no idea if either of these things are remotely possible but one can only dream.

Below: Six Panels
Leica M6, Summicron 35mm f/2, Fuji 400 Superia, 1/1000sec

© JESSE MARLOW



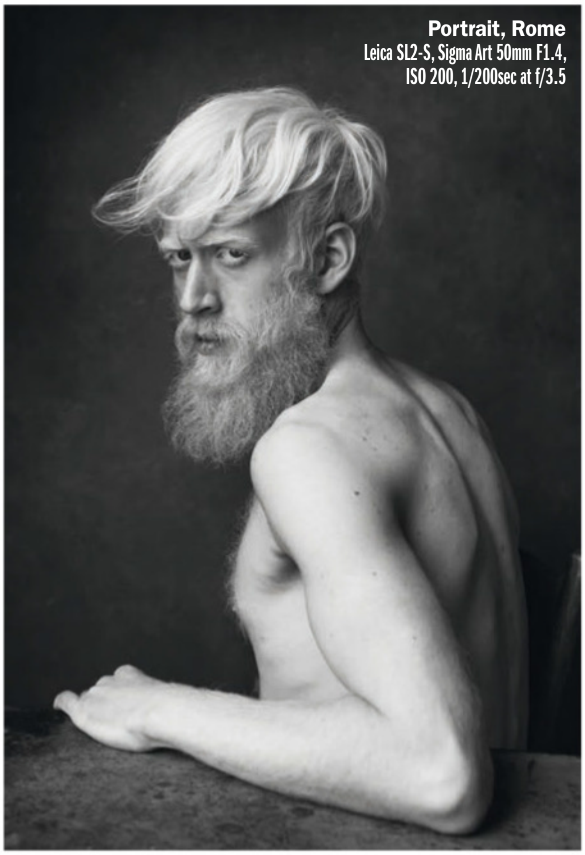
KIT LIST

Leica Q3 43
The fast autofocus, compact size and discreet look of the Leica Q3 43 means it never leaves Jesse's side. He also uses the Leica Q.

Shoulder bag
A decent shoulder bag, like the Billingham S3, is essential for shooting on the streets. It's discreet and offers good protection.

Eolo Perfido

Eolo Perfido is an award-winning portrait photographer and creative director based in Rome, Italy. He runs one of Italy's largest photography studios and is represented by the photo agency Orion57. Over the decades, Eolo has collaborated with many of the world's leading advertising and communication agencies. See **www.eoloperfido.com** and **www.walkingphotographer.net**



Portrait, Rome
Leica SL2-S, Sigma Art 50mm F1.4, ISO 200, 1/200sec at f/3.5

© EOLO PERFIDO

Please describe your preferred subject matter

My work is primarily divided between portraiture and street photography, both united by a passion for photographing people. In the studio, during portraits, I create an intimate dialogue with the subject – a true collaboration where the subject's personality interacts with my vision. I consider portraiture as a dance, where the subject is an active part of the creative process. In street photography, instead, I try to capture 'whispers of beauty' that emerge from urban chaos. I'm fascinated by unexpected relationships and juxtapositions in everyday life, creating images that challenge our perception of reality. Street photography has become a philosophy of life for me, a 'personal zen' that allows me to live in the moment and embrace the unpredictability of the world.

What is your favourite Leica camera/lens combination?

For street photography, the Leica Q3 with Summilux 28mm f/1.7 lens is unbeatable. This system offers the perfect combination of compactness and performance. Using the hyperfocal distance allows me to capture instantly sharp images, while the f/1.7 aperture gives me the flexibility to create street portraits with beautiful bokeh. The sharpness of the Summilux lens is simply extraordinary. In the studio and on location, my preferred combination is the Leica SL3 with 24-90mm lens. This is my true professional workhorse that guarantees quality, flexibility, and consistency. The focal range covers practically all of my needs, while the colour rendition and sensor dynamic range are perfect for my approach to portraiture.

What attracted you to the Leica brand?

First and foremost, the extraordinary build quality and absolute reliability. These are tools that never let you down, even in the most difficult conditions. The user interface is intuitive and allows you to focus on the creative process rather than the technology. But beyond the technical aspect, I appreciate Leica's connection to the history of photography and how it celebrates photographers who have made a difference.

Name one item (aside from a camera) that every photographer should own?

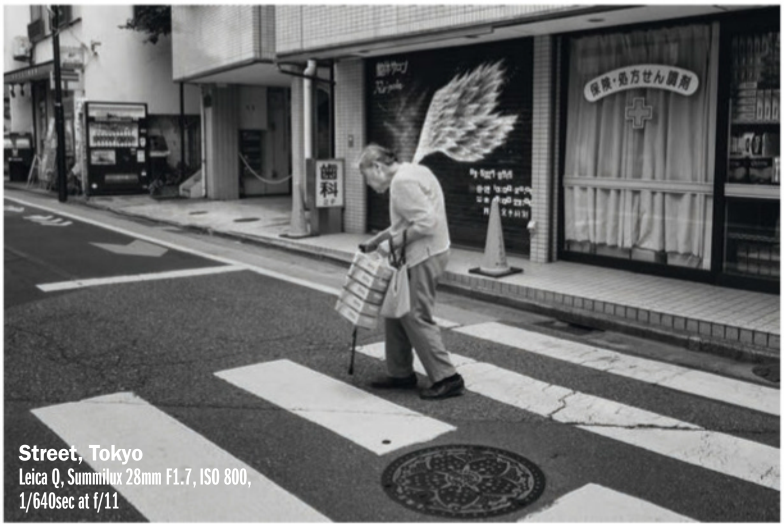
A curious and open mind. If I had to choose a physical object, I would say a notebook. Photography begins in the mind before it comes through the lens. Writing down ideas, emotions, projects, and reflections is fundamental to developing a personal and coherent vision. The notebook becomes a travel companion where you collect inspirations, compositional sketches, and reflections that will later inform your photographic work.

What single thing would improve your photography?

Improving my culture. It's an ongoing, everyday process. I firmly believe that photography is not just technique but above all it is vision, and vision is nourished by knowledge, culture, literature, cinema and art. The broader my cultural background, the deeper and more multifaceted my photography becomes. Learning never ends, and this is what keeps the passion alive.

What features would your dream Leica have?

For the Q3, I would love an electronic hyperfocal setting, which would allow me to quickly optimise depth of field based on street photography situations. As for the SL3, I think it's perfect as it is. Leica has achieved the ideal balance between advanced functionality and simplicity of use that doesn't require any further significant improvements.



Street, Tokyo
Leica Q, Summilux 28mm F1.7, ISO 800, 1/640sec at f/11

© EOLO PERFIDO

KIT LIST

Leica Q3 with Summilux 28mm f/1.7 lens

For street photography, the Leica Q3 with 28mm f/1.7 lens is an ideal match for Eolo. The setup offers the perfect combination of compactness and performance.

Notebook

A notebook, like the Moleskine Plain, is ideal for collecting thoughts and ideas to help and develop a personal and coherent vision.

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Scope and Contest Rules:

The competition has two categories.
Single: You may submit one picture based on the theme of 'Street Life'.
Series: You may submit a total of 5-8 pictures as part of a portfolio based on the theme of 'Street Life'.

Photographers may compete in one category only. All entries must be in digital format (camera or scanned film originals) and must not have won a prize in any other competition. AI-generated images and pictures older than 2022 are excluded.

NATIONAL DEADLINE: MAY 15TH 2025
Email your entry (single image OR series) to: ap.Maestro@kelsey.co.uk. Images must be JPEG and a minimum of 2,000 pixels on the longest side. AP will choose the winners and publish them in a July issue. The first-placed winners will receive a one-year digital subscription to AP and go forward to the International round.

National Maestro winners will also be published on Facebook at the end of June for the EISA Public's Choice competition. Prize for Single and Series winners: €500

EISA Maestro Photo Contest 2025
Street Life

INTERNATIONAL JUDGING: JUNE 2025
The winning entries from each of the 15 participating EISA countries will then be judged together at the Association's General Meeting in June 2025. The final results of the International Maestro contest will be celebrated at the EISA Awards Gala in September 2025 and revealed, online, alongside the EISA product Awards on 15 August 2025.

The winning international photographs will be published in the Sept or Oct issues of all 15 EISA photo magazines/websites. Circumstances permitting, winners will be invited to the EISA Awards ceremony in Sept 2025

For further details, terms and conditions visit www.eisa.eu/maestro and www.amateurphotographer.com

A characterful capture in Bath, taken with the Leica R6, Summicron-R 50mm f/2 lens and Kodak Portra 800 film

ALL PICTURES © GEOFF HARRIS, UNLESS OTHERWISE CREDITED

R you experienced

Older Leicas don't just mean rangefinders. **Geoff Harris** shares his experience of owing two Leica R-series film SLRs

When considering the options for a relatively affordable, quality film SLR, Leica wouldn't be the first name on a lot of people's list. A Nikon F, Olympus OM-1, maybe, but a Leica? While the name is strongly associated with pricey M-series rangefinders, it is easy to forget that the company also produced R-series SLRs, along with a fairly wide range of high-quality, R-series lenses.

The first of these 'R' branded cameras was the R3 in 1976,which came about through a partnership with the Japanese maker, Minolta. The R range drew to a close with the R8 in 1996. Redesigned as a 'new start, it wasn't a great leap forward in technology terms and is now best remembered as one of the ugliest cameras of all time (indeed, it was nicknamed the 'Hunchback of Solms' after a town near the company's factory in Wetzlar, Germany). Then came the R9, again with fairly small changes, until Leica refocused its efforts on rangefinders and, of course, digital.

R you for real?

As a self-confessed Leica fan boy, with a particular fondness for the Leica Q3, I was keen to try some older Leica film models. Sadly, I didn't have a spare war chest for a classic Leica rangefinder and lens, which is when I started to consider a Leica R-series SLR. After doing some research, I was particularly drawn to the Leica R6. Following Leica's various experiments with SLRs featuring program modes and other photographic aids, the firm decided to go back to basics in 1988 with the R6 – the first mechanical, manual-exposure-only SLR produced by the company since the Leicaflex SL2 ceased production.

So why did I decide to go for this mainly mechanical SLR, rather than one with autoexposure or, indeed, autofocus?

Maybe the buying decision was fed by insecurity, some deep-seated need to 'prove' to myself and others that I could still take a decent photo without all the convenience and crutches/handholding you get with digital. Or maybe it was a desire to get back to a more 'pure' photographic experience. As a digital photographer, I had also become very trigger-happy.

A day's shooting, particularly in an interesting foreign location, would generate a tsunami of raw files which I'd then have to download and work through. I was succumbing to overshooting overload and it was getting stressful.

So, I thought shooting film would not only slow me down, but also encourage me to focus on quality rather than quantity – and to print more, too.

Another big attraction was the chance to get my hands on older, but still high-quality, R series manual focus lenses, which have a good reputation, particularly with videographers. So I paid what seemed a very reasonable £500 for a supposedly 'mint' Leica R6 and 50mm f/2 Summicron lens off a private seller on Gumtree. The deal wasn't quite as sweet as it seemed, as it turned out there were some age-related issues with the camera, particularly with the shutter speed dial and light seals. The repair bill wasn't huge, but it was a salutary lesson to buy from a reputable dealer next time, who would have checked it out first.

Popular mechanics

With the niggles fixed, the Leica R6 has been an enjoyable camera to own. Apart from TTL flash and simple built-in metering, the camera is, as described, pretty much entirely manual and mechanical, which is scary but also reassuring. Indeed, the camera functions perfectly well without the (easily obtainable) LR44 batteries, so long as you can live without onboard metering.

The R6 is certainly a tough beast, with a strong die-cast aluminium body and brass bottom cover. It's not surprising that Salgado chose one to cover the burning of the Iraqi oil wells in 1991. It looks quite cool too, with a classy leatherette finishing.

Compared to the plethora of buttons and dials you get on a modern DSLR or mirrorless camera, the R6's design is pretty minimalist. On the top is the hotshoe, shutter speed dial and a hinged film rewind crank, along with various windows for selecting the metering (spot or evaluative), ISO speed, exposure compensation and other essentials.

There's also a useful dioptre to ensure you get the most from the wonderfully bright viewfinder. The buttons are sturdily made too, although the film rewind lever feels a little plasticky.

Loading film takes some practice, as you are supposed to slide the end of the film into the relevant slots on the take-up spool before pulling the film over to the left and locating the cartridge in the chamber. The idea is that you can change film quickly with one hand, but it still feels a bit fiddly. Manually rewinding the film is, fortunately, a more obvious process.

© BEN BRAIN

Above: Geoff with his Leica R6

Far left, below: Taken with the 50mm lens, using Kodak Ektar film

LEICA
R6
Leica

A solid six

In use, I generally find the Leica R6 a delight to use. It's weighty and solid-feeling in the hand without being unduly heavy (625g), and easy to hold steady.

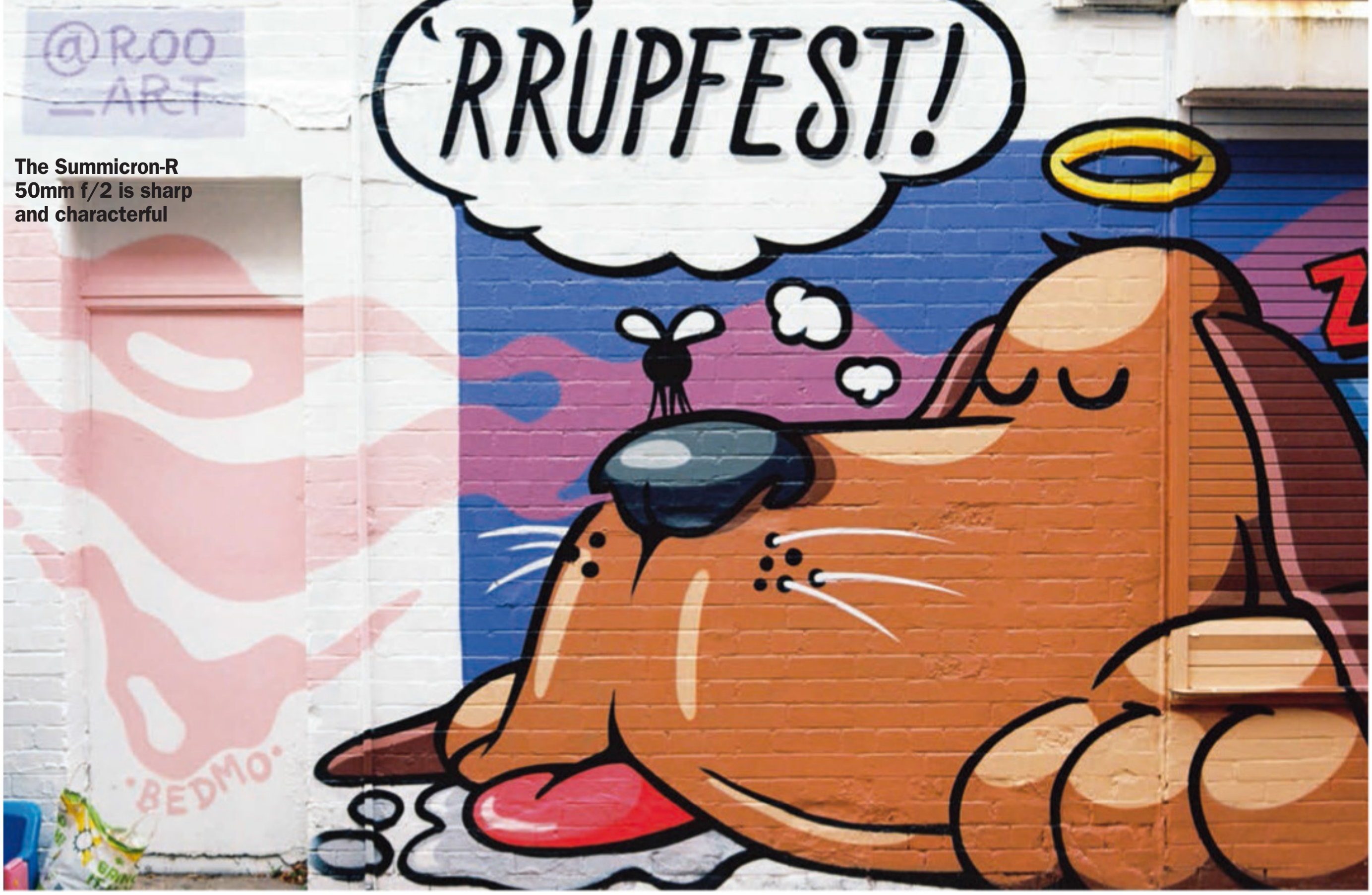
The shutter speed dial is easy to adjust, as is the aperture on my R-series 35mm and 50mmm lenses (more about those later) – the settings appear in the bottom of the finder and are easy to read. I find the exposure compensation slider a bit fiddly, but at least it can be locked, and setting the film speed is child's play. The metering seems pretty accurate, too, though I also take along a light meter to check (again it makes me feel suitably old-school).

Two arrow-shaped triangular LEDs indicate over or under-exposure, with a single red dot indicating the 'correct' exposure and you soon figure it out. Other useful extras include a depth-of-field lever, self-timer for old-school selfies and a cable-release socket, plus the ability to add a motor winder or drive.

Probably the biggest drawback of the R6 is its limited shutter speed. It's limited to 1/1000th sec, although this is not a major problem for the kind of street and documentary/travel photography that I favour.

The lenses

While the camera has been nice to use, I have been even more impressed by the quality of the lenses, particularly the 50mm f/2 Summicron. They are fast, bright and bulletproof, with wonderfully tactile aperture rings, and although they don't have the most up-to-date design or coatings, I



The Summicron-R 50mm f/2 is sharp and characterful

am more than happy with the results. I bought a cheap 'Fotasy' R to L adapter off eBay so I can use them on my digital Leica CL and again, the results are decent – helped by the quality focus peaking on the camera.

Returning to the older Leica, I also bought an Elmarit 35mm f/2.8 for £290, so compared to M-series lenses, you can still pick up decent R-series glass for sensible money. This might be becoming more difficult, however: as mentioned, they are also in high-demand from cinematographers who prize the vintage look.

At sixes and sevens

While the learning curve with my R6 has sometimes been steeper than expected and there were some teething problems at the beginning, I don't regret buying one.

Yes, you are still paying a premium for the coveted red dot, and you can pick up comparable film SLRs and lenses more cheaply, but the R6 has tons of character and heritage. It's something a bit different. As for the lenses, there is still a lot of online debate whether an R-series 50mm Summicron is as 'good' as the much pricier M-mount version, but it's good enough for the money I paid.

Thanks to adapters, R-series lenses have a lot of life left in them, too. Buying into this set-up has slowed my photography down, in a good way, and made me less trigger-happy, so it has fulfilled its purpose. I'm not going to totally change back to film, but the R6 is a useful and fun alternative to my main digital cameras. Pay a bit extra and there is also the R6.2, which is very similar but has the advantage of a higher 1/2000sec shutter speed, an improved TTL flash mode and the ability to meter flash exposure at any shutter speed from 1/100 to B (Bulb). I also believe it only contains Leica components, rather than parts from Minolta, so has purer 'red-dot' DNA.

Being something of a compulsive shopper, I have also acquired a Leica R7, which came out in 1992. It retains most of the classic styling of the R6 range but is more 'electronic,' being controlled by a microprocessor and offering variable, through-the-lens (TTL) flash control in automatic program mode. This sounds like a more flexible choice, but I realise I am also taking a risk by relying on 33-year-old electronics to keep soldiering on. In fact, I find I use my R6 more, maybe for this reason, and will probably sell on the R7 this year.

It's easy to get seduced by the red dot on the front of what is essentially a standard film SLR of yore, but I've found Leica Rs to be educational and rewarding.

Above: Leica R lenses also deliver great results on digital cameras, in this case the APS-C Leica CL, via cheap and widely available adapters

Right: The Leica R7 is another good used choice, but you're more reliant on relatively ancient electronics

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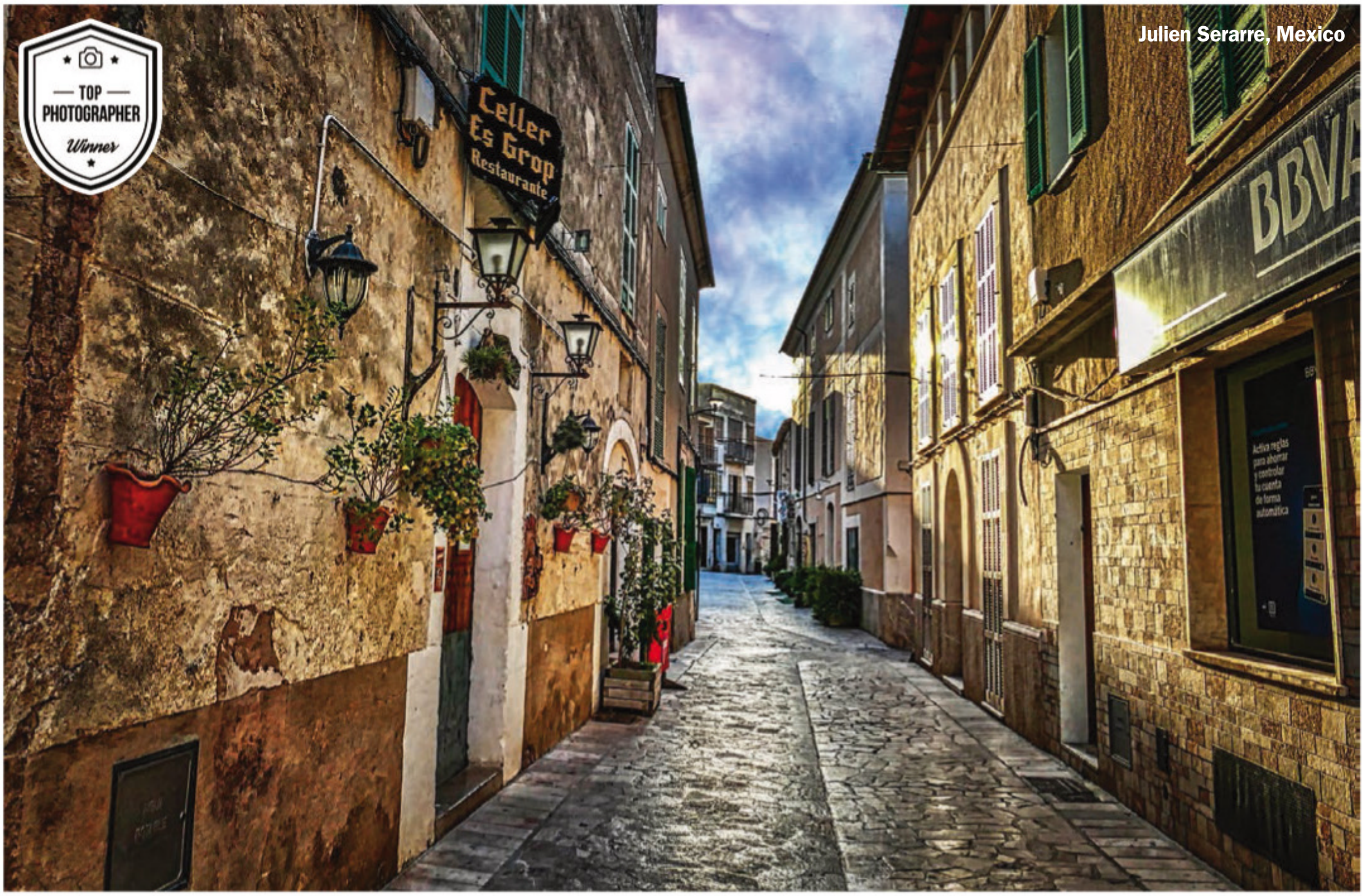

TOP PHOTOGRAPHER
Winner
Celler Es Grop Restaurante
BBVA

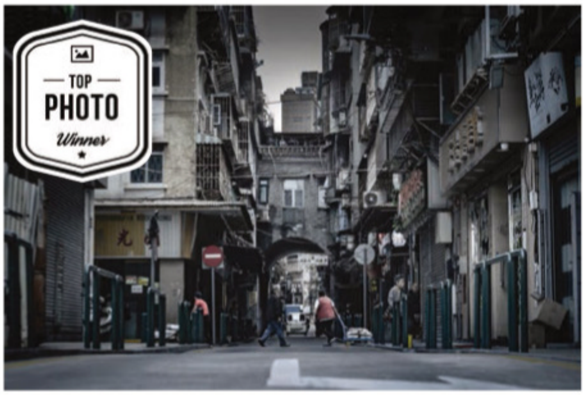
Julien Serarre, Mexico

Meet the GuruShots winners

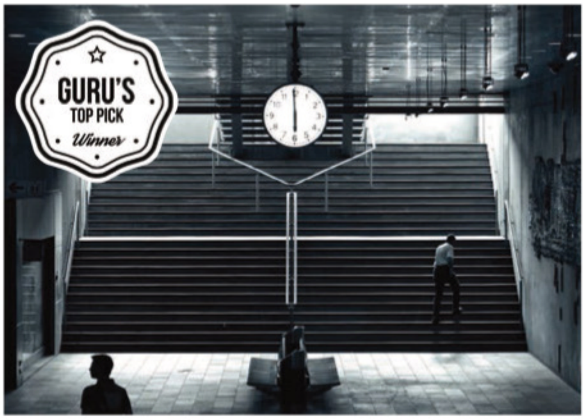
AP showcases the very best images sent in by GuruShots users on the theme of Street Photography

GuruShots, the organisers of the world's greatest photography games and communities, recently challenged its users to send in their best images on the theme of Street Photography. *Amateur Photographer* is partnering with GuruShots and we are now pleased to publish the 18 highest ranked photographs by those who entered. Also, remember that you can view every single image that made it into the Top 500 at amateurphotographer.com

For more inspiring challenges to improve your photo skills and keep motivated, see **gurushots.com**


TOP PHOTO
Winner

skinny panda, North Macedonia


GURU'S TOP PICK
Winner

Luis Lobo Henriques, Portugal

Krystian Pszczola, Poland

Mircea Negulescu, Romania

Americo Paulo Sequeira, Portugal

Zsuzsa Balog, Hungary

Hester Hoornstra, Netherlands

Nicolae Ancuta, Romania

Roy Egloff, Switzerland

Michal Buzaši, Slovak Republic

Valdis Kundziņš, Latvia

Eugene Turkestanov, Canada

Indre Vet, Lithuania

Susana Belenkova, United States

Sylvain Perrier, Canada

Marcos Silva, Brazil

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Professional Imagemaker
Magazine June-July 2024

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Buying Guide

428 lenses listed & rated

Our comprehensive listing of key specifications for mirrorless lenses

Lenses

Interchangeable lenses come in a huge array of types for shooting different kinds of subjects

IN GENERAL, the easiest way to expand the kinds of pictures you can take is by buying different types of lenses. For example, telephoto lenses let you zoom in on distant subjects, while macro lenses enable close-ups of small objects. Large-aperture lenses allow you to isolate subjects against blurred backgrounds, or shoot in low light without having to raise the ISO too high. Meanwhile, all-in-one superzooms cover a wide range of subjects, but usually with rather lower optical quality.

Lens mounts

On the whole, each manufacturer uses its own proprietary lens mount. Notable exceptions are Micro Four Thirds, shared by Olympus and Panasonic, and the full-frame L-mount that's used by Leica, Panasonic and Sigma.

Built-in focus motor

Lenses for mirrorless cameras invariably use built-in motors for autofocus, which are also used for electronic manual focusing. Silent, video-friendly stepper motors are most commonly employed. Manual-focus optics with traditional aperture rings are also widely available.

Filter thread

A thread at the front of the camera will have a diameter, in mm, which will allow you to attach a variety of filters or adapters to the lens.

Maximum aperture

Wider apertures mean you can use faster, motion-stopping shutter speeds.

OUR GUIDE TO THE SUFFIXES USED BY LENS MANUFACTURERS

AF	Nikon AF lenses driven from camera
AF-S	Nikon lenses with Silent Wave Motor
AF-P	Nikon lenses with stepper motors
AL	Pentax lenses with aspheric elements
APD	Fujifilm lenses with apodisation elements
APO	Sigma Apochromatic lenses
ASPH	Aspherical elements
AW	Pentax all-weather lenses
CS	Samyang lenses for APS-C cropped sensors
D	Nikon lenses that communicate distance info
DA	Pentax lenses optimised for APS-C-sized sensors
DC	Nikon defocus-control portrait lenses
DC	Sigma's lenses for APS-C digital
DG	Sigma's designation for full-frame lenses
Di	Tamron lenses for full-frame sensors
Di-II	Tamron lenses designed for APS-C DSLRs
Di-III	Tamron lenses for mirrorless cameras
DN	Sigma's lenses for mirrorless cameras
DO	Canon diffractive optical element lenses
DT	Sony lenses for APS-C-sized sensors
DX	Nikon's lenses for DX-format digital
DS	Canon's Defocus Smoothing technology
E	Nikon lenses with electronic apertures
E	Sony lenses for APS-C mirrorless
ED	Extra-low Dispersion elements
EF	Canon's lenses for full-frame DSLRs
EF-S	Canon's lenses for APS-C DSLRs
EF-M	Canon's lenses for APS-C mirrorless
EX	Sigma's 'Excellent' range
FA	Pentax full-frame lenses
FE	Sony lenses for full-frame mirrorless
G	Nikon lenses without an aperture ring
HSM	Sigma's Hypersonic Motor
IS	Canon's Image-Stabilised lenses
L	Canon's 'Luxury' range of high-end lenses
LD	Low-Dispersion glass
LM	Fujifilm Linear Motor
MP-E	Canon's high-magnification macro lens
OIS	Optical Image Stabilisation
OS	Sigma's Optically Stabilised lenses
PC-E	Nikon tilt-and-shift lenses
PF	Nikon Phase Fresnel optics
PZD	Tamron Piezo Drive focus motor
RF	Canon full-frame mirrorless lenses
S	Nikon's premium lenses for mirrorless
SAM	Sony Smooth Autofocus Motor
SDM	Pentax's Sonic Direct Drive Motor
SMC	Pentax Super Multi Coating
SP	Tamron's Super Performance range
SSM	Sony Supersonic Motor lenses
STF	Sony and Laowa Smooth Trans Focus
STM	Canon lenses with stepper motor
TS-E	Canon Tilt-and-Shift lens
UMC	Ultra Multi Coated
USM	Canon lenses with an Ultrasonic Motor
USD	Tamron Ultrasonic Drive motor
VC	Tamron's Vibration Compensation
VR	Nikon's Vibration Reduction feature
WR	Weather Resistant
Z	Nikon's lenses for mirrorless cameras

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Mirrorless Lenses

LENS	RRP	SCORE	SUMMARY	IMAGE STABILISATION	MOUNT							FULL FRAME	MIN FOCUS (CM)	FILTER THREAD (MM)	DIMENSIONS		
					CANON M	CANON RF	MICRO 4 THIRDS	SONY E	NIKON Z	FUJIFILM X	LEICA L				DIAMETER (MM)	LENGTH (MM)	WEIGHT (G)
CANON MIRRORLESS																	
RF-S 10-18mm f/4.5-6.3 IS STM	£379		Extremely small and lightweight ultra-wide zoom for Canon's APS-C format EOS R mirrorless models	·		·							14	49	69	44.9	150
RF-S 18-45mm f/4.5-6.3 IS STM	£319		Retracting kit zoom designed for the EOS R10; small and lightweight, but offers an uninspiring range	·		·							20	49	69	44.3	130
RF-S 18-150mm f/3.5-6.3 IS STM	£519		General-purpose travel zoom lens for APS-C format RF-mount cameras such as the EOS R7, R10 and R50	·		·							17	55	69	84.5	310
RF-S 55-210mm f/5-7.1 IS STM	£429		Lightweight telephoto zoom for APS-C RF-mount cameras, with decidedly slow maximum aperture	·		·							73	55	69	135	270
RF 10-20mm f/4 L IS STM	£2580		World's widest-angle full-frame rectilinear zoom includes optical stabilisation and weather-sealing	·		·						·	25	n/a	83.7	112	570
RF 14-35mm f/4L IS USM	£1750		High-spec, relatively lightweight ultra-wide zoom that offers 5.5 stops of stabilisation and takes 77mm filters	·		·						·	20	77	84.1	99.8	540
RF 15-30mm f/4.5-6.3 IS STM	£669	4★	Relatively affordable, compact, and lightweight image-stabilised ultra-wideangle zoom	·		·						·	28	67	76.6	88.4	390
RF 15-35mm f/2.8L IS USM	£2330		Premium f/2.8 optic with unusually wide maximum angle of view and optical image stabilisation	·		·						·	28	82	88.5	126.8	840
RF 16mm f/2.8 STM	£320	3★	Small, lightweight ultra-wideangle prime is affordable but has seriously compromised optics			·						·	13	43	69.2	40.1	165
NEW RF 16-28mm f/2.8 IS STM	£1249		Ultra-wideangle zoom with bright aperture and relatively compact, moisture- and dust-resistant design	·		·						·	20	67	76.5	91	445
RF 24mm f/1.4 L VCM	£1680		Large aperture wideangle prime in Canon's hybrid range, with aperture ring and weathersealing			·						·	24	67	76.5	99.3	515
RF 24mm f/1.8 IS STM Macro	£719	4.5★	Bright wideangle prime with optical stabilisation and close focusing that gives half life-size magnification	·		·						·	14	52	74.4	63.1	270
RF 24-50mm f/4.5-6.3 IS STM	£379	4★	Compact, retractable full-frame kit zoom designed for the EOS R8	·		·						·	30	58	69.6	58	210
RF 24-70mm f/2.8L IS USM	£2330		Image-stabilised, large-aperture, standard zoom for Canon's full-frame mirrorless EOS R system	·		·						·	38	82	88.5	127.7	900
RF 24-105mm f/4L IS STM	£1120		General-purpose standard zoom with useful range and image stabilisation	·		·						·	45	77	83.5	107.3	700
RF 24-105mm f/4-7.1 IS STM	£460	4.5★	Designed to be an ultra-compact and lightweight kit zoom, with an unusual 'Centre Focus Macro' option	·		·						·	34	67	76.6	88.8	395
RF 24-240mm f/4-6.3 IS USM	£800	4★	Very respectable all-in-one travel zoom with fast AF and effective IS that's well-matched to the EOS RP	·		·						·	50	72	80.4	122.5	750
RF 28mm f/2.8 STM	£345		Slimline, lightweight 'pancake' prime that's equally well suited to APS-C and full-frame cameras			·						·	23	55	69.2	24.7	120
RF 28-70mm f/2L USM	£3050		Groundbreaking, but huge, full-frame zoom with constant f/2 maximum aperture			·						·	39	95	103.8	139.8	1430
RF 28-70mm f/2.8 IS STM	£1250		Smaller, more affordable alternative to RF 24-70mm f/2.8L is designed to be an upgrade over kit zooms	·		·						·	28	67	76.5	92.2	490
RF 35mm f/1.4 L VCM	£1819		Premium 'hybrid' lens with built-in aperture ring and Canon's first Voice Coil Motor for autofocus			·						·	28	67	76.5	99.3	555
RF 35mm f/1.8 IS STM Macro	£520		Multi-purpose fast prime that includes image stabilisation and 0.5x macro reproduction	·		·						·	17	52	74.4	62.8	305
RF 50mm f/1.2L USM	£2350		Heavyweight ultra-fast standard prime that promises exceptional low-light performance			·						·	80	77	89.8	108	950
RF 50mm f/1.4 L VCM	£1540		Classic professional-spec large aperture standard prime, with hybrid design including an aperture ring			·						·	40	67	76.5	99.3	580
RF 50mm f/1.8 STM	£220	4.5★	Compact, lightweight standard prime uses new mirrorless-optimised optics, including an aspherical element			·						·	30	43	69.2	40.5	160
RF 70-200mm f/2.8 L IS USM Z	£3450		Pro-spec hybrid lens with aperture ring, teleconverter compatibility, and optional powerzoom controller	·		·						·	46	82	88.5	199	1115
RF 70-200mm f/2.8L IS USM	£2700	5★	High-end constant maximum aperture telephoto zoom with unconventional extending barrel design	·		·						·	70	77	89.9	146	1070
RF 70-200mm f/4L IS USM	£1700		Small and light weather-sealed telephoto zoom promises premium optics	·		·						·	60	77	83.5	119	695
RF 85mm f/1.2L USM	£2800		Top-of-the-line, ultra-large aperture, short telephoto portrait prime for full-frame mirrorless			·						·	85	82	103.2	117.3	1195
RF 85mm f/2 Macro IS STM	£650		Relatively compact, lightweight image-stabilised short-telephoto that offers half life-size magnification	·		·						·	35	67	78	91	500
RF 100mm f/2.8 L Macro IS USM	£1480	5★	Superb macro lens with 1.4x magnification and spherical aberration control dial for smoothing blur	·		·						·	26	67	81.5	148	730
RF 100-400mm f/5.6-8 IS USM	£700	4★	Long telephoto zoom that's surprisingly compact, lightweight and affordable due to its small aperture	·		·						·	88	67	79.5	164.7	635
RF 100-500mm f/4.5-7.1L IS USM	£2900	4.5★	Premium ultra-telephoto zoom that's barely any larger than its 100-400mm DSLR counterpart	·		·						·	90	77	94	208	1530
RF 135mm f/1.8 L IS USM	£2560		High-end large-aperture portrait prime boasting optical stabilisation and weather-sealed construction	·		·						·	70	82	89.2	130.3	935
RF 200-800mm f/6.3-9 IS STM	£2300		Ultra-telephoto zoom for full-frame cameras with weather-sealing and relatively manageable size	·		·						·	80	95	102.3	314.1	2050
RF 600mm f/11 IS STM	£700		Remarkable lightweight ultra-telephoto that employs diffractive optics and a collapsible barrel	·		·						·	450	82	93	200	930
RF 800mm f/11 IS STM	£930		Similar design to its 600mm sibling makes it easily the smallest and most affordable 800mm prime	·		·						·	600	95	102	282	1260
FUJIFILM MIRRORLESS																	
XF 8mm F3.5 R WR	£799		Extremely compact, weather-resistant, ultra-wideangle prime, accepts 62mm filters							·			18	62	68	52.8	215
XF 8-16mm F2.8 R LM WR	£1799		Premium ultra-wideangle large-aperture zoom lens with weather-resistant construction							·			25	n/a	88	121.5	805
XF 10-24mm F4 R OIS WR	£899	4.5★	Updated wideangle zoom lens with weather resistance and improved stabilisation that gives fine results	·						·			24	72	77.6	87	385
XF 14mm F2.8 R	£729	5★	Wideangle prime with high resolution into the corners, its performance justifies the price tag							·			18	58	65	58.4	235
XC 15-45mm F3.5-5.6 OIS PZ	£259		Lightweight retractable power zoom that's set to be the entry-level kit lens for X-system cameras	·						·			13	52	62.6	44.2	135
XF 16mm F1.4 R WR	£729	5★	Weather-sealed fast prime for X-system users							·			15	67	73.4	73	375
XF 16mm F2.8 R WR	£349	4.5★	Attractively priced, weather-sealed, compact and lightweight wideangle prime							·			17	49	60	45.4	155
XF 16-50mm F2.8-4.8 R LM WR	£699		Compact and lightweight standard zoom with premium optics and weathersealed construction							·			24	58	65	71.4	240
XF 16-55mm F2.8 R LM WR	£899	5★	A flagship XF standard zoom lens with a constant f/2.8 aperture and weather-resistance							·			60	77	83.3	106	655
XF 16-55mm F2.8 R LM WR II	£1149		Updated premium standard zoom that's considerably smaller and lighter than its predecessor							·			30	72	78.3	95	410
XF 16-80mm F4 R WR OIS	£769	4.5★	Good-quality weather-sealed, constant maximum aperture zoom with a useful focal-length range	·						·			35	72	78.3	88.9	440
XF 18mm F1.4 R LM WR	£879	5★	Large-aperture wideangle prime with weather-resistant construction							·			20	62	68.8	75.6	370
XF 18mm F2 R	£430	4★	A compact wideangle lens with a quick aperture							·			18	52	64.5	40.6	116
XF 18-55mm F2.8-4 R LM OIS	£599		Short zoom lens with optical image stabilisation	·						·			18	58	65	70.4	310
XF 18-120mm F4 LM PZ WR	£899	3.5★	Optimised for both video and stills use, with a power zoom mechanism that operates internally							·			60	72	77.3	123.5	460
XF 18-135mm F3.5-5.6 R LM OIS WR	£699	4★	Weather-resistant zoom for Fujifilm X mount, designed to be the perfect partner for Fujifilm X-T series cameras	·						·			45	77	75.7	97.8	490
XF 23mm F1.4 R LM WR	£819	5★	Replaces the older XF 23mm f/1.4 with updated optics, faster autofocus and a weather-resistant design							·			19	58	67	77.8	375
XF 23mm F2 R WR	£419	5★	Compact weather-resistant wideangle prime lens							·			22	43	60	51.9	180
XF 27mm F2.8 R WR	£419	4.5★	Slimline, lightweight pancake prime with aperture ring and weather-resistant construction							·			34	39	62	23	84
XF 30mm F2.8 R LM WR Macro	£599	4.5★	Relatively compact and affordable macro lens offering internal focus and 1:1 magnification							·			10	43	60	69.5	195
XF 33mm F1.4 R LM WR	£619		Designed to complement the smaller, cheaper 35mm f/1.4, with quicker autofocus and weather-sealing							·			30	58	67	73.5	360
XF 35mm F1.4 R	£439	4★	Shallow depth of field and bokeh effects are simple to achieve with this lens							·			28	52	65	54.9	187
XF 35mm F2 R WR	£299	5★	A powerful and weather-resistant lens that feels great and has the performance to match							·			35	43	60	45.9	170
XC 35mm F2	£169	4.5★	Simplified version of the 35mm f/2, with plastic construction and no weather-sealing or aperture ring							·			35	43	58.4	46.5	130
XF 50mm F1 R WR	£1499		The world's fastest autofocus lens promises to be a very special optic for portrait photography							·			70	77	87	103.5	845
XF 50mm F2 R WR	£449	5★	Lightweight weather-resistant short telephoto prime lens that's ideal for shooting portraits							·			39	46	60	59.4	200
XF 50-140mm F2.8 R LM OIS WR	£1249		A telephoto zoom with a constant maximum aperture and weather-resistance	·						·			100	72	82.9	175.9	995
XC 50-230mm F4.5-6.7 OIS II	£315		The XC lens range is designed to suit Fuji's mid-range CSCs, and this lens has optical image stabilisation	·						·			110	58	69.5	111	375
XF 55-200mm F3.5-4.8 R LM OIS	£599	4★	Telephoto with built-in optical image stabilisation plus aperture control ring	·						·			110	62	75	118	580
XF 56mm F1.2 R	£899	4★	This wide-aperture portrait lens for X-series cameras has great sharpness and detail and is great value							·			70	62	73.2	69.7	405
XF 56mm F1.2 R APD	£1159	4★	Adds apodisation element of 56mm f/1.2 for even more attractive background blur							·			70	62	73.2	69.7	405
XF 56mm F1.2 R WR	£999	4.5★	Large-aperture short-telephoto portrait prime with high quality optics and weather-sealing							·			50	67	79.4	76	454
XF 60mm F2.4 XF R Macro	£599		A short lens designed for macro work with half-life-size magnification							·			26.7	39	64.1	70.9	215
XF 70-300mm F4-5.6 R LM OIS WR	£729		Lightweight weather-sealed telezoom that's compatible with 1.4x and 2x teleconverters for greater reach	·						·			83	67	75	132.5	580
XF 80mm F2.8 R LM OIS WR Macro	£1249	4★	Fujifilm's long-awaited 1:1 macro includes weather-resistance and optical image stabilisation	·						·			25	62	80	130	750
XF 90mm F2 R LM WR	£699	5★	A classic portrait lens that's sharp, with gorgeous bokeh							·			60	62	75	105	540
XF 100-400mm F4.5-5.6 R LM OIS WR	£1399	5★	This superb zoom is both water and dust resistant, and can operate in -10°C temperatures	·						·			175	77	94.8	210.5	1375
XF 150-600mm F5.6-8 R LM OIS WR	£1899	4.5★	Long telephoto zoom that employs a small maximum aperture to keep the size and weight low	·						·			240	82	99	314.5	1605
XF 500mm F5.6 R LM OIS WR	£2899		Pro-spec super-telephoto prime that gives 750mm equivalent view and is compatible with teleconverters	·						·			275	95	104.5	255.5	1335

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Mirrorless Lenses

					MOUNT										DIMENSIONS		
LENS	RRP	SCORE	SUMMARY	IMAGE STABILISATION	CANON M	CANON RF	MICRO 4 THIRDS	SONY E	NIKON Z	FUJIFILM X	LEICA L	FULL FRAME	MIN FOCUS (CM)	FILTER THREAD (MM)	DIAMETER (MM)	LENGTH (MM)	WEIGHT (G)
LAOWA MIRRORLESS																	
6mm F2 Zero-D MFT	£519		Widest-angle rectilinear lens available for Micro Four Thirds cameras, yet still remarkably small				·						9	58	61	52	188
7.5mm f/2 MFT	£499	4.5★	Tiny but sharp wideangle prime for Micro Four Thirds featuring manual focus and aperture control				·						12	46	50	55	170
10mm f/2 Zero-D MFT	£399	4.5★	Tiny, sharp wide prime for Micro Four Thirds with manual focus and auto aperture control from the camera				·						12	46	54	41	125
17mm f/1.8 MFT	£189		Inexpensive compact prime for Micro Four Thirds cameras with manual focus and aperture operation				·						15	46	55	50	160
18mm f/0.95 APO MFT Argus	£519		Ultra-large aperture, manual focus prime, designed for Micro Four Thirds only				·						20	62	80	83	500
25mm f/0.95 APO MFT Argus	£399		Manual-focus standard prime for Micro Four Thirds with ultra-large aperture at an affordable price				·						25	62	71	86	570
50mm f/2.8 2x Ultra Macro APO MFT	£409		Macro lens for Micro Four Thirds with manual focus, electronic aperture setting and 2x magnification				·						13.6	49	53.5	79	240
4mm f/2.8 Fisheye	£249		Lightweight fisheye lens for APS-C and Micro Four Thirds offering a circular image with a 210° angle of view				·	·		·			8	n/a	45.2	25.5	135
8-16mm f/3.5-5 CF	£579		Ultra-wideangle zoom for APS-C cameras provides 12-24mm equivalent view at an affordable price		·			·	·	·			20	86	88.4	88.5	463
9mm f/2.8 Zero-D	£499		Compact manual-focus prime for APS-C mirrorless cameras promises very low distortion		·		·	·		·			12	49	60	53	215
10mm f/4 Cookie	£339	4★	Slim, lightweight and affordable ultra-wideangle prime for APS-C offers decent optics			·		·	·	·	·		10	37	59.8	25	130
25mm f/0.95 CF APO Argus	£649		Ultra-large aperture lens for APS-C cameras with manual focus and aperture control		·	·		·	·	·			34	62	71.5	81	575
33mm f/0.95 CF APO Argus	£499		Ultra-fast manual-focus standard prime for APS-C cameras that promises minimal colour fringing			·		·	·	·			35	62	71.5	83	590
65mm f/2.8 2x Ultra Macro	£409	4.5★	Superb manual-focus macro lens that provides unusually high 2x magnification		·			·		·	·		17	52	57	100	335
9mm f/5.6 FF RL	£869		The world's widest full-frame rectilinear lens is also available in Leica M mount					·	·		·	·	12	n/a	62.4	66	350
10mm f/2.8 Zero-D FF	£839		Ultra-wideangle prime for full-frame cameras; Laowa's first autofocus lens in its E and Z-mount versions			·		·	·		·	·	12	77	82	70.8	420
10-18mm f/4.5-5.6	£899		The world's widest zoom for full-frame mirrorless cameras, with manual focus and aperture control			·		·	·		·	·	15	37	70	90.9	496
11mm f/4.5 FF RL	£769		Compact, lightweight ultra-wideangle rectilinear prime for full-frame mirrorless accepts 62mm filters					·	·		·	·	19	62	63.5	58	254
12-24mm f/5.6 FF	£729		Remarkably small and light ultra-wideangle zoom with manual focus and aperture control			·		·	·			·	15	77	69.4	93.6	497
14mm f/4 FF RL	£599		Smallest of a trio of manual-focus ultra-wideangle rectilinear RL primes for full-frame mirrorless			·		·	·		·	·	27	52	58	59	228
15mm f/2 Zero D	£899	4.5★	Manual-focus fast ultra-wideangle prime for full-frame mirrorless cameras, with minimal distortion			·		·	·		·	·	15	72	66	82	500
15mm f/4.5 Zero-D Shift	£1249	4★	The world's widest-angle shift lens offers +/-11mm movement in any direction			·		·	·			·	20	n/a	79	103	597
20mm f/4 Zero-D Shift	£1139		Wideangle shift lens that offers +/-11mm movement and promises zero distortion			·		·	·		·	·	25	82	91	95	747
28mm f/1.2 FF Argus	£669		Manual-focus large-aperture wideangle prime for full-frame mirrorless cameras			·		·	·		·	·	50	62	68.5	106.3	562
35mm f/0.95 FF Argus	£899		Ultra-large aperture manual-focus lens for full-frame mirrorless cameras			·		·	·			·	50	72	76.8	103	755
45mm f/0.95 FF Argus	£869		Manual-focus prime lens with an ultra-large maximum aperture, that promises a natural-looking perspective			·		·	·			·	50	72	76.8	110	835
58mm f/2.8 2x Ultra Macro APO	£539		Specially designed for full-frame mirrorless, this manual focus lens provides 2x magnification			·		·	·		·	·	18.5	67	74	117	595
85mm f/5.6 2x Ultra Macro APO	£449	4.5★	Remarkably small and lightweight full-frame macro lens that delivers twice life-size magnification			·		·	·			·	16.3	46	53	81	291
90mm f/2.8 2x Ultra Macro APO	£539		Fully manual macro lens offering twice life-size magnification, designed for full-frame mirrorless			·		·	·		·	·	20.5	67	74	120	619
LEICA MIRRORLESS																	
14-24mm f/2.8 Vario-Elmarit-SL Asph	£2220		Ultra-wideangle zoom for Leica's SL full-frame cameras with a large maximum aperture								·	·	28	n/a	85	131	855
24-70mm f/2.8 Vario-Elmarit-SL Asph	£2300		Large aperture standard zoom lens for Leica's full-frame mirrorless cameras								·	·	38	82	88	123	856
35mm f/2 Summicron-SL Asph	£1950		Relatively small and affordable by Leica's standards. Not to be confused with much pricier 35mm f/2 APO								·	·	24	67	74.5	83	400
50mm f/2 Summicron-SL Asph	£1700		Leica's least expensive full-frame L-mount lens is half the weight of the premium APO alternative								·	·	45	67	74.5	83	402
70-200mm f/2.8 Vario-Elmarit-SL Asph	£2780		Optically stabilised and weather-sealed full-frame telephoto zoom, compatible with teleconverters	·							·	·	65	82	89	207	1540
100-400mm f/5-6.3 Vario-Elmar-SL	£1910		Weather-sealed and optically stabilised long telephoto zoom, compatible with 1.4x teleconverter	·							·	·	110	82	198	88	1530
NIKON MIRRORLESS																	
12-28mm f/3.5-5.6 PZ VR Nikkor Z DX	£379	4.5★	Ultra-wideangle lens for Nikon DX-format cameras with power zoom operation	·					·				19	67	72	63.5	205
16-50mm f/3.5-6.3 VR Nikkor Z DX	£329		Extremely compact and lightweight retractable kit zoom for Nikon's DX-format mirrorless	·					·				30	46	70	32	135
18-140mm f/3.5-5.6 VR Nikkor Z DX	£599	4★	Small and light all-in-one travel zoom for DX mirrorless cameras, with impressive close-focus capability	·					·				20	62	73	90	315
24mm f/1.7 Nikkor Z DX	£289	4.5★	Compact, lightweight and affordable large-aperture prime for DX-format cameras						·				18	46	70	40	135
50-250mm f/4.5-6.3 VR Nikkor Z DX	£379	4.5★	Entry-level telephoto zoom for DX mirrorless featuring retractable barrel design	·					·				100	62	74	110	405
14-24mm f/2.8 S Nikkor Z	£2499	4.5★	Pro-spec weather-sealed wideangle zoom that can use 112mm filters via the included hood						·			·	28	112	88.5	124.5	650
14-30mm f/4 S Nikkor Z	£1349	4.5★	Remarkably compact ultra-wideangle zoom that accepts 82mm screw-in filters						·			·	28	82	89	85	485
17-28mm f/2.8 Nikkor Z	£1199	4.5★	Smaller and more affordable large-aperture ultra-wide alternative to the 14-24mm f/2.8						·			·	19	67	75	101	450
20mm f/1.8 S Nikkor Z	£1049		Weather-sealed large maximum-aperture prime promises ultra-sharp images						·			·	20	77	84.5	108.5	505
24-50mm f/4-6.3 Nikkor Z	£439		Ultra-compact and lightweight zoom designed to be sold with the entry-level Nikon Z 5						·			·	35	52	73.5	51	195
24-70mm f/2.8 S Nikkor Z	£2199	5★	Superb fast standard zoom includes OLED display and customisable control dial						·			·	38	82	89	126	805
24-70mm f/4 S Nikkor Z	£999		General-purpose standard zoom for Nikon's full-frame mirrorless system						·			·	30	72	77.5	88.5	500
24-120mm f/4 S Nikkor Z	£1099	4.5★	Standard zoom for Z-system cameras with extremely useful focal-length range						·			·	35	77	84	118	630
24-200mm f/4-6.3 VR Nikkor Z	£849	4.5★	Billed as the perfect ultra-compact travel zoom lens, with dust- and drip-resistant construction	·					·			·	70	67	76.5	114	570
24mm f/1.8 S Nikkor Z	£1049	5★	Large-aperture wideangle prime that aims to combine edge-to-edge sharpness with attractive bokeh						·			·	25	72	78	96.5	450
26mm f/2.8 Nikkor Z	£529	3.5★	Ultra-compact 'pancake' lens, designed for full-frame but also a good fit to DX-format cameras						·			·	20	52	70	23.5	125
28mm f/2.8 Nikkor Z	£249		Inexpensive, compact full-frame prime, also available as an SE version in a kit with the Z fc						·			·	19	52	70	43	155
28-75mm f/2.8 Nikkor Z	£949	4★	Large-aperture standard zoom that's much more compact and affordable than its 24-70mm f/2.8 sibling						·			·	19	67	75	120.5	565
28-400mm f/4-8 VR Nikkor Z	£1400	4★	Longest-range superzoom lens for full-frame cameras, includes weather sealing and optical stabilisation	·					·			·	20	77	84.5	141.5	725
NEW 35mm f/1.2 S Nikkor Z	£2899		Pro-spec ultra-large aperture prime with premium optics and weather-sealed construction						·			·	30	82	90	150	1060
35mm f/1.4 Nikkor Z	£649	4★	Relatively affordable and lightweight large-aperture prime lens for full-frame cameras						·			·	27	62	74.5	86.5	415
35mm f/1.8 S Nikkor Z	£849		Fast, moderate-wideangle prime designed for optimum optical performance						·			·	25	62	73	86	370
40mm f/2 Nikkor Z	£249	4.5★	Small, lightweight and affordable standard prime that focuses fast and gives decent image quality						·			·	29	52	70	45.5	170
50mm f/1.2 S Nikkor Z	£2299		Ultra-large aperture weather-sealed standard prime that promises 'elaborate bokeh'						·			·	45	82	89.5	150	1090
50mm f/1.4 Nikkor Z	£499	4★	Relatively affordable and lightweight large-aperture prime lens for full-frame cameras	·					·			·	37	62	74.5	86.5	420
50mm f/1.8 S Nikkor Z	£599		Large-aperture prime that promises exceptional edge-to-edge sharpness						·			·	40	62	76	86.5	415
50mm f/2.8 MC Nikkor Z	£649		Compact, lightweight and relatively affordable macro lens that offers 1:1 magnification						·			·	16	46	74.5	66	260
70-180mm f/2.8 Nikkor Z	£1299	4.5★	Relatively small and lightweight alternative to the Z 70-200mm f/2.8 that's also much more affordable						·			·	27	67	83.5	151	795
70-200mm f/2.8 VR S Nikkor Z	£2399	5★	Pro-spec large-aperture telezoom with optical image stabilisation and built-in OLED display	·					·			·	100	77	89	220	1360
85mm f/1.8 S Nikkor Z	£799	4.5★	Portrait prime for Nikon's full-frame mirrorless system that promises beautiful bokeh						·			·	80	67	75	99	470
85mm f/1.2 S Nikkor Z	£2999	5★	Pro-spec ultra-large-aperture short telephoto prime designed for portrait photography						·			·	85	82	102.5	141.5	1160
100-400mm f/4.5-5.6 VR S Nikkor Z	£2699	5★	Optically-stabilised pro-level telephoto zoom includes top-plate status panel and weather-sealed build	·					·			·	75	77	98	222	1355
105mm f/2.8 VR S MC Nikkor Z	£999	5★	Professional-spec macro lens that boasts optical stabilisation and offers life-size magnification	·					·			·	29	62	85	140	630
135mm f/1.8 S Plena Nikkor Z	£2699	5★	Superb portrait lens that gives pin-sharp images with gorgeous bokeh, but is large and heavy in return						·			·	82	82	98	139.5	995
180-600mm f/5.6-6.3 VR Nikkor Z	£1799		Reasonably compact and affordable super-telephoto zoom, compatible with 1.4x and 2.0x teleconverters	·					·			·	130	95	110	315.5	1955

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Mirrorless Lenses

LENS	RRP	SCORE	SUMMARY		MOUNT										DIMENSIONS		
				IMAGE STABILISATION	CANON M	CANON RF	MICRO 4 THIRDS	SONY E	NIKON Z	FUJIFILM X	LEICA L	FULL FRAME	MIN FOCUS (CM)	FILTER THREAD (MM)	DIAMETER (MM)	LENGTH (MM)	WEIGHT (G)
NISI MIRRORLESS																	
9mm f/2.8 ASPH	£398		Weather-sealed ultra-wide manual-focus prime for APS-C and Micro Four Thirds mirrorless cameras			·		·	·	·			20	67	74	78	364
15mm f/4 ASPH	£429		Ultra-wide manual focus prime for full-frame mirrorless promises minimal distortion and 10-ray sunstars			·		·	·	·		·	13	72	75.6	80.5	470
OLYMPUS / OM SYSTEM MIRRORLESS																	
7-14mm f/2.8 ED Pro	£999	4.5★	Super-wideangle zoom lens that's dustproof, splashproof and freeze-proof				·						20	n/a	78.9	105.8	534
8mm f/1.8 Pro Fisheye	£799		Fisheye lens with impressive image quality that's dustproof, splashproof and freeze-proof				·						12	n/a	62	80	315
8-25mm f/4 ED Pro	£899	5★	Weather-sealed wideangle zoom with premium optics and extended tele range that accepts 72mm filters				·						23	72	77	88.5	411
9mm f/8 Fish-eye Body Cap Lens	£89		Slimline lens in a body cap with 140° angle of view				·						20	n/a	56	12.8	30
9-18mm f/4-5.6 ED II	£600		Updated ultra-wideangle zoom gains water-repellant fluorine coating and OM System branding				·						25	52	56.2	49.3	154
12mm f/2.0 ED	£739	5★	A wideangle fixed lens for the Micro Four Thirds system				·						20	46	56	43	130
12-40mm f/2.8 ED Pro II	£899		Gains uprated IP53 weather-resistance, improved optical coatings, and the 'OM System' badge				·						20	62	69.9	84	382
12-45mm f/4 Pro	£599	5★	Excellent compact, lightweight weather-sealed zoom that offers 0.5x magnification at all focal lengths				·						23	58	63.4	70	254
12-100mm f/4 IS ED Pro	£1099	5★	Superb high-end weather-sealed superzoom lens featuring powerful in-lens IS with Sync IS	·			·						15	72	77.5	116.5	561
12-200mm f/3.5-6.3 ED	£800	4★	24-400mm equivalent superzoom includes weather-sealed construction and decent optics				·						22	72	77.5	99.7	455
14-42mm f/3.5-5.6 II R	£269		A redesigned variation of the standard kit lens				·						25	37	56.5	50	112
14-42mm f/3.5-5.6 EZ	£329		Compact kit lens for Olympus PEN and OM-D models with powerzoom control				·						20	37	60.6	22.5	93
14-150mm f/4-5.6 II	£550		High-powered zoom for all your needs – from wideangle to telephoto – plus weather-resistance				·						50	58	63.5	83	285
17mm f/1.2 ED Pro	£1300		High-end, large-aperture weather-sealed prime designed for documentary or landscape work				·						20	62	68.2	87	390
17mm f/1.8 MSC	£450	5★	Wide-aperture, wideangle prime boasting excellent peak sharpness and low colour fringing				·						25	46	57	35	120
NEW **17mm f/1.8 II**	£479		Updated version of this classic small prime lens, now with weather-sealed construction				·						25	46	57.6	37.6	112
20mm f/1.4 ED Pro	£649	4.5★	Compact, large-aperture standard prime that's the first lens to wear the 'OM System' label				·						25	58	63.4	61.7	247
25mm f/1.2 ED Pro	£1099	5★	Large maximum-aperture prime combines impressive sharpness with lovely bokeh and fast, reliable AF				·						30	62	70	87	410
25mm f/1.8	£370		Compact prime lens with bright f/1.8 aperture				·						25	46	57.8	42	137
NEW **25mm f/1.8 II**	£399		Updated bright-aperture ultra-compact prime gains weather-resistant construction				·						25	46	59.4	42	156
30mm f/3.5 ED Macro	£249		New in the M.Zuiko Premium range, this macro lens features super-fast AF and weighs only 128g				·						9.5	46	57	60	128
40-150mm f/2.8 ED Pro	£1299	4★	This high-quality 80-300mm equivalent lens offers amazing portability for this pro class				·						70	72	79.4	160	760
40-150mm f/4 ED Pro	£799	4.5★	Remarkably compact telephoto zoom provides high-quality optics and weather-sealed construction				·						70	62	68.9	99.4	382
40-150mm f/4-5.6 R	£309		This middle-distance zoom lens has an 80-300mm 35mm-equivalent focal length				·						90	58	63.5	83	190
45mm f/1.2 ED Pro	£1200		Large-aperture lens designed for portrait photography with premium optics				·						50	62	70	84.9	410
45mm f/1.8	£279	5★	Fast-aperture lens for taking portrait shots is sharp, quiet and has no colour fringing				·						50	37	56	46	116
60mm f/2.8 Macro	£450		High-precision macro lens that's dustproof and splashproof				·						19	46	56	82	185
75-300mm f/4.8-6.7 ED II	£499		Update featuring Zuiko Extra-low Reflection Optical coating said to reduce ghosting				·						90	58	69	117	423
75mm f/1.8 ED	£799	5★	Ultra-fast prime lens ideal for portraits and action shots				·						84	58	64	69	305
90mm f/3.5 Macro ED IS Pro	£1299	5★	Pro-spec macro lens with twice life-size magnification, weather-sealing, and optical stabilisation	·			·						22	62	69.8	136	453
100-400mm f/5-6.3 ED IS	£1100	4★	Large, weather-sealed optically stabilised ultra-telephoto zoom, compatible with teleconverters	·			·						130	72	86.4	205.7	1120
NEW **100-400mm f/5-6.3 ED IS II**	£1299		Updated ultra-telephoto zoom, now with more easily-removable tripod mount ring and full Sync IS support	·			·						130	72	86.4	205.6	1125
150-600mm f/5-6.3 ED IS	£2499		Optically stabilised ultra-telephoto zoom that offers a massive 300-1200mm equivalent range	·			·						280	95	109.4	264.4	2065
300mm f/4 IS Pro	£2200		Compact ultra-telephoto prime with optical image stabilisation, compatible with Sync IS	·			·						140	77	92.5	227	1270
PANASONIC MIRRORLESS																	
G 7-14mm f/4	£740	5★	For a wideangle zoom, the overall level of resolution is very impressive				·						25	n/a	70	83.1	300
G 8mm Fisheye f/3.5	£730		The world's lightest and smallest fisheye lens for an interchangeable-lens camera				·						10	22	60.7	51.7	165
DG 8-18mm f/2.8-4 Leica ASPH	£1049		Splashproof, dustproof and freeze-proof ultra-wideangle zoom with premium optics				·						23	67	73.4	88	315
DG 9mm f/1.7 Leica Summilux ASPH	£449	4.5★	Compact large-aperture wideangle prime with an 18mm equivalent angle of view				·						9.5	55	60.8	52	130
DG 10-25mm f/1.7 Leica ASPH	£1800		The world's fastest standard zoom lens, with an unusual 20-50mm equivalent range				·						28	77	87.6	128	690
DG 12mm f/1.4 Leica Summilux ASPH	£1199	4.5★	Compact fast wideangle quality with excellent optics and built-in aperture ring				·						20	62	70	70	335
G 12-32mm f/3.5-5.6 MEGA OIS	£270		Very compact with a versatile zoom range and three aspherical lenses	·			·						20	37	55.5	24	70
DG 12-35mm f/2.8 ASPH OIS Leica	£880		Fast standard zoom with reduced focus breathing and smooth aperture operation for video	·			·						15	58	67.6	73.8	306
G 12-60mm f/3.5-5.6 OIS ASPH	£439	4★	Incorporates a stepping motor for a smooth, silent operation and features a dust and splashproof design	·			·						20	58	66	71	210
DG 12-60mm f/2.8-4 OIS Leica	£880		Premium standard zoom with useful focal-length range and weather-resistant construction	·			·						20	62	68	86	320
G 14mm f/2.5 II	£249		Wideangle pancake lens that should suit landscape photographers				·						18	46	55.5	20.5	55
G X 14-42mm f/3.45-5.6 X PZ POWER OIS	£369	4★	Powered zoom; impressive results in terms of both sharpness and chromatic aberration	·			·						20	37	61	26.8	95
G 14-45mm f/3.5-5.6 MEGA OIS	£189		A lightweight and compact standard zoom featuring MEGA OIS optical image stabilisation	·			·						30	52	60	60	195
G 14-140mm f/3.5-5.6 ASPH POWER OIS II	£619		Weather-resistant update to Panasonic's optically stabilised superzoom lens	·			·						30	58	67	75	265
DG 15mm f/1.7 Leica Summilux	£549	4★	High-speed prime with a compact metal body, includes three aspherical lenses to cut down distortion				·						20	46	57.5	36	115
G 20mm f/1.7 ASPH II	£249	4.5★	Ultra-compact fast prime with excellent optics but slower autofocus than more modern options				·						20	46	25.5	63	87
G 25mm f/1.7 ASPH	£159	4.5★	Inexpensive fast normal prime for Micro Four Thirds that offers very respectable optical quality				·						25	46	60.8	52	125
DG 25mm f/1.4 Leica Summilux II Asph	£580	5★	Lovely fast standard prime with dust- and splash-resistant construction				·						30	46	63	54.5	205
DG 25-50mm f/1.7 Leica ASPH	£1800		High-end ultra-large-aperture short telephoto zoom that's designed to complement the 10-25mm f/1.7				·						28	77	87.6	127.6	654
G 30mm f/2.8 Macro MEGA OIS	£300	3★	Compact lens offering true-to-life magnification capability for better macro images	·			·						10	46	58.8	63.5	180
G 35-100mm f/4-5.6 ASPH MEGA OIS	£300		Telephoto zoom equivalent to 70-200mm on a 35mm camera	·			·						90	46	55.5	50	135
DG 35-100mm f/2.8 Power OIS Leica Vario-Elmarit	£1099		Updated fast telephoto zoom promises improved flare resistance thanks to Nano Surface Coatings	·			·						85	58	67.4	99.9	360
DG 42.5mm f/1.2 Leica DG OIS	£1399	5★	Mid-telephoto high-speed Leica DG Nocticron lens with 2 aspherical lenses and ultra-wide aperture	·			·						50	67	74	76.8	425
G 42.5mm f/1.7 Power OIS	£349		Mid-telephoto lens with a 35mm equivalent of 85mm, its f/1.7 aperture promises a beautiful bokeh effect	·			·						37	31	55	50	130
DG 45mm f/2.8 OIS Macro Leica	£539		Tiny macro lens with 1:1 magnification and optical image stabilisation	·			·						15	46	63	62.5	225
G 45-150mm f/4-5.6 MEGA OIS	£280	4★	Compact, lightweight telephoto zoom comprising 12 elements in nine groups	·			·						90	52	62	73	200
G X 45-175mm f/4-5.6 X PZ POWER OIS	£400	4★	A powered long-focal-length zoom lens	·			·						90	46	61.6	90	210
G 45-200mm f/4-5.6 MEGA OIS II	£380		Telephoto zoom lens with dust and splashproof construction, supports Panasonic's Dual IS	·			·						100	52	70	100	380
DG 50-200mm f/2.8-4 OIS Leica	£1600		Premium telephoto zoom that completes Panasonic's Leica f/2.8-4 series	·			·						75	67	76	132	655
G 100-300mm f/4-5.6 MEGA OIS II	£570	4★	Long zoom lens with dustproof and splashproof construction, supports Panasonic's Dual IS	·			·						150	67	73.6	126	520
DG 100-400mm f/4-6.3 OIS II Leica	£1499		Updated super-telephoto zoom promises improved zoom mechanism and adds teleconverter compatibility	·			·						130	72	83	171.5	985
DG 200mm f/2.8 OIS Leica	£2699	5★	Stunning 400mm-equivalent fast telephoto prime, comes with 1.4x teleconverter in the box	·			·						115	77	87.5	174	1245

ALL PRICES ARE RRPS, STREET PRICES MAY VARY

We've tried our hardest to ensure that the information in this guide is as complete and accurate as possible. However, some errors will inevitably have crept in along the way: if you spot one, please let us know by emailing ap.ed@kelsey.co.uk. Unfortunately we don't have space to list every single product on the market, so we don't include the most expensive speciality items. **Before making a purchase we advise you to check prices, along with any crucial specifications or requirements, with either a reputable retailer or the manufacturer's website.**

Mirrorless Lenses

				IMAGE STABILISATION	CANON M	CANON RF	MICRO 4 THIRDS	SONY E	NIKON Z	FUJIFILM X	LEICA L	FULL FRAME	MIN FOCUS (CM)	FILTER THREAD (MM)	DIAMETER (MM)	LENGTH (MM)	WEIGHT (G)
LENS	RRP	SCORE	SUMMARY		MOUNT										DIMENSIONS		
S 14-28mm f/4-5.6 Macro	£880	4.5★	Lightweight and affordable ultra-wideangle zoom that offers unusually close focusing								·	·	15	77	84	89.8	345
S Pro 16-35mm f/4	£1499		Relatively compact and lightweight premium wideangle zoom with weather-sealed construction								·	·	25	77	85	99.6	500
S 18mm f/1.8	£800	4.5★	Large-aperture ultra-wideangle prime that's relatively compact, lightweight and affordable								·	·	18	67	73.6	82	340
S 18-40mm f/4.5-6.3	£519		World's smallest and lightest full-frame zoom lens, designed to match the Lumix S9 camera								·	·	15	62	67.9	40.9	155
S 20-60mm f/3.5-5.6	£619		Compact, lightweight and relatively inexpensive standard zoom with a wider than usual view								·	·	15	67	77.4	87.2	350
S 24mm f/1.8	£799	4.5★	Wideangle prime that's relatively lightweight and compact								·	·	24	67	73.6	82	310
S 26mm f/8	£219		Slim and ultra-lightweight 'pancake' prime, but manual-focus only and with a fixed f/8 aperture								·	·	25	n/a	67.1	18.1	58
S Pro 24-70mm f/2.8	£2250		Pro-range fast standard zoom includes dust- and splash-resistance, along with a focus-clutch mechanism								·	·	37	82	90.9	140	935
S 24-105mm f/4 Macro OIS	£1750		L-mount full-frame standard zoom which offers half-life-size magnification	·							·	·	30	77	84	118	680
S 28-200mm f/4-7.1 Macro OIS	£899	4.5★	Unusually small and lightweight full-frame superzoom lens, but with slow maximum aperture in return	·							·	·	14	67	77.3	93.4	413
S 35mm f/1.8	£580	4.5★	Relatively compact and lightweight full-frame prime designed for both stills and video shooting								·	·	24	67	73.6	82	295
S Pro 50mm f/1.4	£2300		Premium, fast standard prime for full-frame mirrorless with built-in aperture ring								·	·	44	77	90	130	955
S 50mm f/1.8	£429	4★	Relatively lightweight and affordable standard prime that gives fine mages but can struggle with close focus								·	·	45	67	73.6	82	300
S 85mm f/1.8	£600		This short telephoto portrait lens is the first in a new line of practical, affordable f/1.8 primes								·	·	80	67	73.6	82	355
S Pro 70-200mm f/2.8 OIS	£2599		Pro-spec fast telephoto zoom incorporating optical image stabilisation and weather-sealing	·							·	·	95	82	94.4	208.6	1570
S Pro 70-200mm f/4 OIS	£1300		Image-stabilised, weather-sealed telephoto zoom for L-mount full-frame mirrorless	·							·	·	92	77	84.4	179	985
S 70-300mm f/4.5-5.6 Macro OIS	£1260		Relatively lightweight optically-stabilised telephoto zoom featuring dust- and splash-proof construction	·							·	·	54	77	84	148	790
S 100mm f/2.8 Macro	£999	5★	Unusually small and lightweight short-telephoto macro that offers life-size magnification								·	·	20	67	73.6	82	298

SAMYANG MIRRORLESS

LENS	RRP	SCORE	SUMMARY	IMAGE STABILISATION	CANON M	CANON RF	MICRO 4 THIRDS	SONY E	NIKON Z	FUJIFILM X	LEICA L	FULL FRAME	MIN FOCUS (CM)	FILTER THREAD (MM)	DIAMETER (MM)	LENGTH (MM)	WEIGHT (G)
7.5mm f/3.5 UMC fisheye MFT	£253		Fisheye manual-focus lens with Ultra Multi Coated lens elements to reduce flare and ghosting				·						9	n/a	48.3	60	197
8mm f/2.8 UMC fisheye II	£249		Updated version of the Samyang 8mm f/2.8 UMC Fisheye lens, with improved optical construction		·			·		·			30	n/a	60	64.4	290
12mm f/2 NCS CS	£330		Fast wideangle prime for APS-C and Micro Four Thirds mirrorless cameras		·		·	·		·			20	67	72.5	59	245
35mm f/1.2 ED AS UMC CS	£359		Standard-angle manual-focus lens for mirrorless cameras with APS-C sensor size		·		·	·		·			38	62	67.5	74.2	420
50mm f/1.2 AS UMC CS	£299	5★	Fast telephoto prime that can produce stunning results with a super-shallow depth of field		·		·	·		·			50	62	67.5	74.5	380
85mm f/1.8 ED UMC CS	£319		Manual-focus medium-telephoto portrait prime for APS-C mirrorless cameras		·		·	·		·			65	62	67.5	81	423
300mm f/6.3 ED UMC CS Reflex	£249		A compact reflex mirror lens dedicated for mirrorless compact system cameras		·		·	·		·			90	58	73.7	64.5	320
12mm f/2 AF	£402	4★	Affordable large-aperture ultra-wide prime for APS-C cameras, available in E, X, and Canon RF mounts			·		·		·			19	62	70	59.2	213
14mm f/2.8 AF	£629		Autofocus wideangle prime for Sony full-frame mirrorless FE mount cameras					·				·	20	n/a	85.5	97.5	505
18mm f/2.8 FE AF	£350		Compact, lightweight autofocus wideangle prime for Sony full-frame mirrorless cameras					·				·	25	58	63.5	60.5	145
24mm f/1.8 FE AF	£460		Boasts Custom Mode function that sets the lens to infinity focus for astrophotography					·				·	19	58	65	71.5	230
24mm f/2.8 FE AF	£280	4.5★	Small, lightweight autofocus wideangle prime for full-frame mirrorless cameras					·				·	24	49	61.8	37	93
24-70mm f/2.8 FE AF	£828		Samyang's first-ever zoom lens includes a manual focus ring that can be switched to controlling aperture					·				·	35	82	88	128.5	1027
35-150mm f/2-2.8 FE AF	£1319		Ultra-large-aperture zoom with weather-sealed construction and video-friendly features					·				·	33	82	92.8	157.4	1231
35mm f/1.4 FE AF II	£635	4.5★	Large-aperture prime with AF-stop button and custom mode switch for manual focus ring					·				·	29	67	75	115	659
NEW 35mm f/1.4 P FE AF	£528		Third-generation 'Prima' lens includes weathersealing and a USB-C port for firmware updates					·				·	30	67	75	99.2	470
35mm f/1.8 FE AF	£360		Smaller, lighter and more affordable than its Sony equivalent, with a dual-mode manual focus / control ring					·				·	29	58	65	63.5	210
35mm f/2.8 FE AF	£279	4.5★	Compact, lightweight, inexpensive autofocus prime lens for full-frame mirrorless cameras					·				·	35	49	61.8	33	86
45mm f/1.8 FE AF	£350	4.5★	Small standard prime for Sony full-frame mirrorless					·				·	45	49	61.8	56.1	162
50mm f/1.4 FE AF II	£599	4.5★	Billed as the smallest and lightest large-aperture 50mm prime for Sony FE, with completely new optical design					·				·	40	72	80.1	88.9	420
75mm f/1.8 AF	£380	4.5★	Small, lightweight short telephoto for full-frame Sony, also available in Fujifilm X mount					·		·		·	69	58	65	69	230
85mm f/1.4 FE AF II	£639		Relatively lightweight portrait prime with a focus hold button and custom mode switch					·				·	85	72	83.4	99.5	507
135mm f/1.8 FE AF	£799		Fast-aperture mid-telephoto lens designed for subjects such as portraiture and astrophotography					·				·	69	82	93.4	129.6	772

SIGMA MIRRORLESS

LENS	RRP	SCORE	SUMMARY	IMAGE STABILISATION	CANON M	CANON RF	MICRO 4 THIRDS	SONY E	NIKON Z	FUJIFILM X	LEICA L	FULL FRAME	MIN FOCUS (CM)	FILTER THREAD (MM)	DIAMETER (MM)	LENGTH (MM)	WEIGHT (G)
10-18mm f/2.8 DC DN | C	£600	4.5★	Strikingly compact and lightweight large-aperture ultra-wideangle zoom for APS-C cameras					·		·	·		11.6	67	72.2	64	255
16mm f/1.4 DC DN | C	£450	4.5★	Large-aperture wideangle lens with dustproof and splashproof design		·		·	·		·	·		25	67	72.2	92.3	405
18-50mm f/2.8 DC DN | C	£430	4.5★	Fast standard zoom for APS-C mirrorless, that's relatively inexpensive but lacks optical stabilisation			·		·		·	·		12.1	55	61.6	76.5	290
23mm f/1.4 DC DN | C	£450		Large-aperture prime for APS-C cameras with 35mm equivalent angle of view					·		·	·		25	52	65.8	76.9	340
30mm f/1.4 DC DN | C	£300	4★	A prime for Micro Four Thirds and Sony E-mount users, it's impressively sharp even at f/1.4		·		·	·		·	·		30	52	64.8	73	140
56mm f/1.4 DC DN | C	£400	4.5★	Small, lightweight large-aperture portrait prime for APS-C Sony and Micro Four Thirds		·		·	·		·	·		50	55	66.5	59.5	280
14mm f/1.4 DG DN | A	£1399	5★	World's first 14mm lens with a bright f/1.4 aperture, designed with astrophotography in mind					·			·	·	30	n/a	101.4	149.9	1170
15mm f/1.4 DG DN Fisheye | A	£1859		Full-frame f/1.4 fisheye lens, which covers the entirety of full-frame and provides a 180° angle of view					·			·	·	38.5	n/a	104	157.9	1360
14-24mm f/2.8 DG DN | A	£1459	5★	Superb ultra-wide zoom for full-frame mirrorless that's two-thirds of the weight of its DSLR equivalent					·			·	·	28	n/a	85	131	795
16-28mm f/2.8 DG DN | C	£750	4.5★	Relatively compact and affordable ultra-wideangle zoom designed to complement the 28-70mm f/2.8					·			·	·	25	72	77.2	100.6	450
17mm f/4 DG DN | C I-series	£550	4★	Small and lightweight ultra-wideangle prime that boasts all-metal barrel construction					·			·	·	12	55	64	48.8	225
20mm f/1.4 DG DN | A	£859		Bright wideangle prime that includes an array of features designed for astrophotography					·			·	·	23	82	87.8	111.2	635
20mm f/2 DG DN | C I-series	£650	5★	Small wideangle autofocus prime with a large maximum aperture and premium metal construction					·			·	·	22	62	70	74.4	370
24mm f/1.4 DG DN | A	£779		Large-aperture wideangle prime boasts aperture ring, focus lock switch, and rear filter holder					·			·	·	25	72	75.7	95.5	520
24mm f/2 DG DN | C I-series	£550	5★	Moderately fast premium wideangle prime with metal construction, aperture ring, and great optics					·			·	·	24.5	62	70	74	360
24mm f/3.5 DG DN | C I-series	£480		Compact metal-barrelled wideangle prime that offers half life-size magnification					·			·	·	10.8	55	64	48.8	225
24-70mm f/2.8 DG DN | A	£1050		Large-aperture standard zoom for full-frame mirrorless that promises 'best in class' image quality					·			·	·	38	82	87.8	122.9	835
24-70mm f/2.8 DG DN II | A	£1179	5★	Second-generation standard zoom gains updated optics, faster autofocus, and aperture ring					·			·	·	17	82	87.8	120.2	745
28-45mm f/1.8 DG DN | A	£1299	4★	World's largest-aperture full-frame zoom, but at the expense of bulk and limited focal-length range					·			·	·	30	82	87.8	151.4	960
28-70mm f/2.8 DG DN | C	£760	4.5★	Small, lightweight and relatively affordable large-aperture full-frame standard zoom					·			·	·	19	67	72.2	101.5	470
28-105mm f/2.8 DG DN | A	£1399	4.5★	Versatile large-aperture standard zoom, with fine optics and longer than usual telephoto end					·			·	·	40	82	87.8	157.9	995
35mm f/1.2 DG DN | A	£1459		World's largest-aperture autofocus lens for either Sony E or Leica L mount promises top-notch optics					·			·	·	30	82	87.8	136.2	1090
35mm f/1.4 DG DN | A	£750	5★	General-purpose fast prime promises top-notch optics, fast quiet AF, and a comprehensive set of controls					·			·	·	30	67	75.7	109.5	645
35mm f/2 DG DN | C I-series	£550		Everyday walkaround prime that promises premium optical performance					·			·	·	27	58	70	65	325
45mm f/2.8 DG DN | C	£549		Ultra-compact full-frame standard prime for everyday shooting, with all-metal barrel construction					·			·	·	24	55	64	46.2	215
50mm f/1.2 DG DN | A	£1399	5★	Fully featured ultra large-aperture standard prime that's surprisingly compact and affordable					·			·	·	40	72	81	108.8	745
50mm f/1.4 DG DN | A	£849	5★	All-new, designed for mirrorless version of Sigma's legendary 50mm f/1.4 'Art' lens					·			·	·	45	72	78.2	109.5	670
50mm f/2 DG DN | C I-series	£620	4.5★	Relatively compact everyday standard prime, with metal barrel construction and aperture ring					·			·	·	45	58	70	68	350
65mm f/2 DG DN | C I-series	£650		Compact short-telephoto portrait prime designed to deliver sharp images with attractive background blur					·			·	·	55	62	72	74.7	405
70-200mm f/2.8 DG DN OS | S	£1499	5★	Designed-for-mirrorless fast telezoom includes weather-sealed construction and declickable aperture ring	·				·			·	·	65	77	90.6	205	1345
85mm f/1.4 DG DN | A	£999	5★	Superb large-aperture portrait prime for full-frame cameras that's a fraction of the size of its SLR equivalent					·			·	·	85	77	82.4	94.1	630
90mm f/2.8 DG DN | C I-series	£550	4.5★	Small short-telephoto prime with all-metal construction and aperture ring that's ideal for portraits					·			·	·	50	55	64	61.7	295
100-400mm f/5-6.3 DG DN OS | C	£899	5★	Relatively compact, lightweight and affordable long telephoto zoom with optical stabilisation	·				·		·	·	·	112	67	86	199.2	1140
105mm f/2.8 DG DN Macro | A	£700	5★	Weather-sealed 1:1 macro lens that delivers superlative image quality					·			·	·	29.5	62	74	133.6	715
60-600mm f/4.5-6.3 DG DN OS | S	£2000		Unique 10x ultra-telephoto zoom for E and L mounts with a shortest focal length of 60mm	·				·			·	·	45	105	119.4	281.2	2485
150-600mm f/5-6.3 DG DN OS | S	£1200		Ultra-telephoto zoom that aims to provide pro-spec optics and build quality in a relatively light package	·				·			·	·	58	95	109.4	263.6	2100
500mm f/5.6 DG DN OS | S	£2779		Impressively portable long telephoto prime, with optical stabilisation plus dust- and splashproof build	·				·			·	·	320	95	107.6	234.7	1370

Mirrorless Lenses

LENS	RRP	SCORE	SUMMARY		MOUNT										DIMENSIONS		
				IMAGE STABILISATION	CANON M	CANON RF	MICRO 4 THIRDS	SONY E	NIKON Z	FUJIFILM X	LEICA L	FULL FRAME	MIN FOCUS (CM)	FILTER THREAD (MM)	DIAMETER (MM)	LENGTH (MM)	WEIGHT (G)
SONY MIRRORLESS																	
E 10-18mm f/4 OSS	£750	4★	Super-wideangle zoom with Super ED glass and Optical SteadyShot image stabilisation	·				·					25	62	70	63.5	225
E 10-20mm f/4 G PZ	£750	4.5★	Ultra-wideangle powerzoom lens for APS-C mirrorless with dust- and moisture-resistant construction					·					13	62	69.8	55	178
E 11mm f/1.8	£500	4.5★	Lightweight large-aperture ultra-wideangle prime for APS-C cameras, aimed primarily at vloggers					·					15	55	66	57.5	181
E 15mm f/1.4 G	£750		Large-aperture APS-C wideangle prime with premium optics, weather-sealing and an aperture ring					·					17	55	66.6	69.5	219
E 16mm f/2.8	£220	4★	Pancake lens for APS-C mirrorless, with a circular aperture and Direct Manual Focus					·					24	49	62	22.5	67
E 16-50mm f/3.5-5.6 PZ OSS II	£289		Updated compact powerzoom kit lens gains support for video and stills shooting at 120 frames per second	·				·					25	40.5	66	31.2	107
E 16-55mm f/2.8 G	£1200		Premium, high-resolution, weather-resistant standard zoom for APS-C mirrorless cameras					·					33	67	73	100	494
E 16-70mm f/4 ZA OSS Vario-Tessar T*	£839		A lightweight, versatile mid-range zoom with a constant f/4 aperture	·				·					35	55	66.6	75	308
E 18-55mm f/3.5-5.6 OSS	£270		Optical SteadyShot, said to be silent during movie capture, and a circular aperture	·				·					25	49	62	60	194
E 18-105mm f/4 G PZ OSS	£499		Sony G lens for E-mount cameras with a constant f/4 aperture	·				·					45	72	78	110	427
E 18-110mm f/4 G PZ OSS	£3300		Constant f/4 maximum aperture powerzoom for video production, for Super 35mm / APS-C cameras	·				·					40	95	110	167.5	1105
E 18-135mm f/3.5-5.6 OSS	£570		Lightweight, compact standard zoom designed to match Alpha 6000-series cameras	·				·					45	55	67.2	88	325
E 18-200mm f/3.5-6.3 OSS LE	£489		Smaller and lighter than comparable lenses, this is an ideal high-magnification travel lens	·				·					50	62	68	98	460
E 18-200mm f/3.5-6.3 PZ OSS	£999		Boasts powered zoom and image stabilisation with Active Mode, making it ideal for movies	·				·					30	67	93.2	99	649
E 20mm f/2.8	£309		Pancake wideangle lens promises to be the perfect walkaround partner for E-mount cameras					·					20	49	62.6	20.4	69
E 24mm f/1.8 ZA Sonnar T*	£839		Top-quality Carl Zeiss optic ideally suited to Alpha 6000-series bodies					·					16	49	63	65.6	225
E 30mm f/3.5 Macro	£219		A macro lens for Sony's APS-C compact system cameras					·					9	49	62	55.5	138
E 35mm f/1.8 OSS	£399		Lightweight, versatile prime with Optical SteadyShot image stabilisation	·				·					30	49	62.2	45	155
E 50mm f/1.8 OSS	£219		A handy, low-price image-stabilised portrait lens for the APS-C Alpha mirrorless range	·				·					39	49	62	62	202
E 55-210mm f/4.5-6.3 OSS	£289		Lightweight optically stabilised telephoto zoom lens for APS-C mirrorless	·				·					100	49	63.8	108	345
E 70-350mm f/4.5-6.3 G OSS	£830		High-end long telephoto zoom for APS-C E-mount cameras includes optical stabilisation	·				·					110	67	77	142	625
FE 12-24mm f/2.8 GM	£2900		The world's widest-angle zoom with a constant f/2.8 maximum aperture promises pro-level quality					·				·	28	n/a	97.6	137	847
FE 12-24mm f/4 G	£1700	4.5★	Compact, weather-resistant super-wideangle zoom with high-quality optics					·				·	28	n/a	87	117.4	565
FE 14mm f/1.4 GM	£1400		Remarkably small and lightweight large-aperture ultra-wideangle prime that accepts rear gel filters					·				·	25	n/a	83	99.8	460
FE 16-25mm F2.8 G	£1249	4.5★	Compact, affordable and well-featured f/2.8 wideangle zoom, but with somewhat restrictive range					·				·	18	67	78.4	91.4	409
FE 16-35mm f/2.8 GM	£2300		Premium G Master-series fast wideangle zoom with weather-resistant construction					·				·	28	82	88.5	121.6	680
FE 16-35mm f/2.8 GM II	£2400	5★	All-new wideangle zoom that combines premium optics, relatively compact size, and weather-sealing					·				·	22	82	87.8	111.5	547
FE 16-35mm f/4 ZA OSS Vario-Tessar T*	£1289	5★	Zeiss full-frame wideangle zoom lens that provides consistently good image quality	·				·				·	28	72	78	98.5	518
FE 16-35mm f/4 G PZ	£1300	4.5★	Small and lightweight ultra-wideangle zoom with superbly implemented power zoom operation					·				·	23	72	80.5	88.1	353
FE 20mm f/1.8 G	£949	5★	Compact, super-sharp wideangle prime featuring aperture ring and weather-resistant construction					·				·	18	67	84.7	73.5	373
FE 20-70mm f/4 G	£1400	4.5★	Lightweight standard zoom with excellent optics and an unusually wide view, but a painful price					·				·	30	72	78.7	99	488
FE 24mm f/1.4 GM	£1450	5★	Compact, large-aperture wideangle prime includes aperture ring and weather-resistant construction					·				·	24	67	75.4	92.4	445
FE 24mm f/2.8 G	£630		Small, lightweight wideangle prime with premium aluminium construction					·				·	24	49	68	45	162
FE 24-50mm f/2.8 G	£1149	4★	Large-aperture standard zoom with relatively compact size but limited focal-length range					·				·	33	67	74.8	92.3	440
FE 24-70mm f/2.8 GM	£1799	5★	This pro-grade standard lens for the Sony full-frame FE mount gives exceptionally sharp results					·				·	38	82	87.6	136	886
FE 24-70mm f/2.8 GM II	£2100	5★	Superb second-generation pro standard zoom is smaller, lighter, sharper and more video-friendly					·				·	30	82	87.8	119.9	695
FE 24-70mm f/4 ZA OSS Vario-Tessar T*	£1049	5★	Compact lens with an f/4 maximum aperture across the zoom range and built-in image stabilisation	·				·				·	40	67	73	94.5	426
FE 24-105mm f/4 G OSS	£1199	5★	Excellent full-frame standard zoom with optical stabilisation and weather-resistant design	·				·				·	38	77	83.4	113.3	663
FE 24-240mm f/3.5-6.3 OSS	£929	3★	Ideal for travel, landscapes and more, with built-in stabilisation. Also dust- and moisture-resistant	·				·				·	50	72	80.5	118.5	780
FE 28mm f/2	£419	4★	This full-frame wideangle prime with a bright f/2 maximum aperture promises excellent sharpness					·				·	29	49	64	60	200
FE 28-60mm f/4-5.6	£450		Ultra-compact, retractable kit zoom designed for the rangefinder-style Alpha 7C					·				·	30	40.5	67	45	167
NEW FE 28-70mm f/2 GM	£3049	5★	Remarkable ultra-large aperture standard zoom that boasts superb optics in a reasonable size					·				·	38	86	92.9	139.8	918
FE 28-70mm f/3.5-5.6 OSS	£449		Built-in Optical SteadyShot image stabilisation, lightweight, and a popular zoom range	·				·				·	30	55	72.5	83	295
FE 28-135mm PZ f/4 G OSS	£2379		Constant f/4 maximum aperture powerzoom for video production, for full-frame cameras	·				·				·	95	95	162.5	105	1215
FE 35mm f/1.4 ZA Distagon T*	£1559	4★	Full-frame ZEISS Distagon lens with large, bright f/1.4 aperture					·				·	30	72	78.5	112	630
FE 35mm f/1.4 GM	£1499	5★	Stunning large-aperture prime that's smaller, lighter and focuses closer than its ZA predecessor					·				·	27	67	76	96	524
FE 35mm f/1.8	£630	4.5★	Lightweight fast prime with fine optics and quick autofocus that's well-matched to Alpha 7 series bodies					·				·	22	55	65.6	73	280
FE 35mm f/2.8 ZA Sonnar T*	£699		When coupled with a full-frame Sony E-mount camera, this prime lens promises to deliver					·				·	35	49	61.5	36.5	120
FE 40mm f/2.5 G	£630	5★	Sony's first 40mm prime is a compact, lightweight design with weather-sealed metal build					·				·	28	49	68	45	173
FE 50mm f/1.2 GM	£2100	5★	Remarkable ultra-fast prime offers stunning quality for the same size and weight as its f/1.4 ZA sibling					·				·	40	72	87	108	778
FE 50mm f/1.4 ZA Planar T*	£1500	5★	Optically excellent premium fast prime, but large and heavy for its class					·				·	45	72	83.5	108	778
FE 50mm f/1.4 GM	£1500	5★	Superb large-aperture standard prime with excellent optics and a pro-spec control setup					·				·	38	67	80.6	96	516
FE 50mm f/1.8	£240	4★	Features a new optical design with a single aspherical element, but slow autofocus					·				·	45	49	68.6	59.5	186
FE 50mm f/2.5 G	£630		Small prime boasts an aperture ring that can be switched between clicked and clickless operation					·				·	35	49	68	45	174
FE 50mm f/2.8 Macro	£500	4★	Sony's budget macro for full-frame CSCs offers decent optics but is slow at focusing					·				·	16	55	70.8	71	236
FE 55mm f/1.8 ZA Sonnar T*	£849		35mm full-frame prime lens with wide aperture allowing good images indoors or in low light					·				·	50	49	64.4	70.5	281
FE 70-200mm f/2.8 GM OSS	£2500	5★	Compact, lightweight telephoto zoom lens for full-frame E-mount bodies	·				·				·	96	77	88	200	1480
FE 70-200mm f/2.8 GM OSS II	£2600	5★	The world's lightest 70-200mm f/2.8 provides superb optical quality and extensive controls	·				·				·	40	77	88	200	1045
FE 70-200mm f/4 G OSS	£1359	4★	G-series telephoto zoom lens, dust- and water-resistant, with built-in image stabilisation	·				·				·	100	72	80	175	840
FE 70-200mm f/4 Macro G OSS II	£1749	5★	Updated telezoom boasts excellent optics and useful half life-size macro feature	·				·				·	26	72	82.2	149	794
FE 70-300mm f/4.5-5.6 G OSS	£1150		Sony's most compact image-stabilised telephoto zoom	·				·				·	90	72	84	143.5	854
FE 85mm f/1.8	£550	4★	Relatively inexpensive portrait lens includes dust and moisture-resistant construction					·				·	80	67	78	82	371
FE 85mm f/1.4 GM	£1889	5★	Stunning image quality from Sony's premium 'G Master' portrait lens					·				·	80	77	89.5	107.5	820
FE 85mm f/1.4 GM II	£1849	5★	Updated short-telephoto portrait lens provides even better image quality in a lighter design					·				·	85	77	84.7	107.3	642
FE 90mm f/2.8 Macro G OSS	£1049	5★	Optically excellent dedicated macro lens for Sony's full-frame E-mount cameras	·				·				·	28	62	79	130.5	602
FE 100mm f/2.8 STF GM OSS	£1700		Innovative portrait lens combines optical stabilisation and an apodisation filter for smooth bokeh	·				·				·	57	72	85.2	118.1	700
FE 100-400mm f/4.5-5.6 GM OSS	£2500	5★	Premium optically stabilised, weather-sealed telezoom designed to match the Alpha 9	·				·				·	98	77	93.9	205	1395
FE 135mm f/1.8 GM	£1750	5★	Large-aperture portrait prime for full-frame combines exceptional sharpness and attractive bokeh					·				·	70	82	89.5	127	950
FE 200-600mm f/5.6-6.3 G OSS	£1799		Weather-resistant super-telephoto, with easy-to-use internal zoom design	·				·				·	240	95	111.5	318	2115

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Mirrorless Lenses

TAMRON MIRRORLESS

LENS	RRP	SCORE	SUMMARY		MOUNT										DIMENSIONS		
				IMAGE STABILISATION	CANON M	CANON RF	MICRO 4 THIRDS	SONY E	NIKON Z	FUJIFILM X	LEICA L	FULL FRAME	MIN FOCUS (CM)	FILTER THREAD (MM)	DIAMETER (MM)	LENGTH (MM)	WEIGHT (G)
11-20mm F/2.8 Di III-A RXD	£819		Large-aperture wideangle zoom for Sony APS-C mirrorless cameras with moisture-resistant construction			·		·					15	67	73	86.2	335
17-70mm F/2.8 Di III-A VC RXD	£780	4.5★	Provides a uniquely useful combination of 4.1x zoom range, f/2.8 maximum aperture and optical stabilisation	·				·		·			19	67	74.6	119.3	525
18-200mm F/3.5-6.3 Di III VC	£390		Lightweight, compact, all-in-one zoom for mirrorless cameras, to cover practically any shooting situation	·	·			·					50	62	68	96.7	460
18-300mm F/3.5-6.3 Di III-A VC VXD	£679	3★	Superzoom lens for APS-C mirrorless cameras, available in both Fujifilm X and Sony E mounts	·				·		·			15	67	75.5	125.6	620
17-28mm F/2.8 Di III RXD	£899	5★	Small and lightweight fast wideangle zoom boasts excellent optics and fast autofocus					·				·	19	67	73	99	420
17-50mm F/4 Di III VXD	£749		Unique zoom for full-frame cameras that extends from the wideangle into the 'standard' range					·				·	30	67	74.8	114.4	460
20mm F/2.8 Di III OSD M1:2	£399		Widest of a trio of lightweight primes offering half life-size magnification and splash-proof build					·				·	11	67	73	64	220
20-40mm F/2.8 Di III VXD	£879	4.5★	Billed as the smallest and lightest ultra-wideangle f/2.8 zoom for full-frame E-mount cameras					·				·	17	67	74.4	86.5	365
24mm F/2.8 Di III OSD M1:2	£399		Compact wideangle prime designed for high-resolution full-frame mirrorless cameras					·				·	12	67	73	64	215
28-75mm F/2.8 Di III RXD	£699	4.5★	Fast zoom for full-frame mirrorless is relatively compact and has fine optics					·				·	19	67	73	117.8	550
28-75mm F/2.8 Di III VXD G2	£849	4.5★	Second-generation fast standard zoom boasts new, faster AF motor and completely redesigned optics					·				·	18	67	76	118	540
28-200mm F/2.8-5.6 Di III RXD	£800	4★	All-in-one superzoom with impressive maximum aperture but limited wideangle and no stabilisation					·				·	19	67	74	117	575
28-300mm F/4-7.1 Di III VC VXD	£879		Full-frame superzoom with built-in optical stabilisation, but restricted wideangle and maximum aperture	·				·				·	19	67	77	126	610
35mm F/2.8 Di III OSD M1:2	£399		Optimized Silent Drive (OSD) motor promises full compatibility with advanced autofocus modes					·				·	15	67	73	64	210
35-150mm F/2.0-2.8 Di III VXD	£1599	4★	Super-fast standard zoom for Sony full-frame mirrorless with useful close-focus distance					·				·	33	82	89	158	1165
50-300mm F/4.5-6.3 Di III VC VXD	£819	5★	Impressively sharp yet compact telephoto zoom, with useful focal-length range and close-up capability	·				·				·	22	67	75	150	665
50-400mm F/4.5-6.3 Di III VC VXD	£1250	4.5★	Telephoto zoom that's similar in size to conventional 100-400mm designs, but starts at 50mm	·				·	·			·	25	67	88.5	183.4	1155
70-180mm F/2.8 Di III VXD	£1350	4.5★	Remarkably compact large-aperture telephoto prime includes newly-developed VXD autofocus drive					·				·	85	67	81	149	810
70-180mm F/2.8 Di III VC VXD G2	£1330	4.5★	Updated large-aperture telephoto zoom gains optical stabilisation while staying compact	·				·				·	85	67	83	156.5	855
70-300mm F/4.5-6.3 Di III RXD	£650	4★	Lightweight, affordable, weather-sealed telephoto zoom, available in Nikon Z and Sony E mounts					·	·			·	80	67	77	148	545
90mm F/2.8 Di III Macro VXD	£600		Attractively priced macro lens that gives life-size magnification and includes moisture-resistant construction					·	·			·	23	67	79.2	126.5	640
150-500mm F/5-6.7 Di III VC VXD	£1379		Long-range telephoto zoom that's similar in packed length to 100-400mm optics, comes in E and X mounts	·				·		·		·	60	82	93	209.6	1725

VOIGTLANDER MIRRORLESS

LENS	RRP	SCORE	SUMMARY	IMAGE STABILISATION	CANON M	CANON RF	MICRO 4 THIRDS	SONY E	NIKON Z	FUJIFILM X	LEICA L	FULL FRAME	MIN FOCUS (CM)	FILTER THREAD (MM)	DIAMETER (MM)	LENGTH (MM)	WEIGHT (G)
10.5mm f/0.95 Nokton	£999		Ultra-large aperture super-wide prime for Micro Four Thirds with manual focus and aperture setting				·						17	72	77	82.4	585
17.5mm f/0.95 Nokton	£799		35mm equivalent wideangle manual-focus prime with exceptionally large aperture				·						15	58	63.4	80	540
25mm f/0.95 Nokton II	£719		All-metal construction with traditional manual focus and aperture rings				·						17	52	60.6	70	435
29mm f/0.8 Super Nokton	£1599		Currently the world's fastest photographic lens in production				·						37	62	72.3	88.9	703
42.5mm f/0.95 Nokton	£749		Large aperture short-telephoto portrait lens for Micro Four Thirds cameras				·						23	58	64.3	74.6	571
60mm f/0.95 Nokton	£1049		Unique super-fast manual-focus medium telephoto for MFT offers a 120mm equivalent view				·						34	77	82.5	87.7	860
18mm f/2.8 Color-Skopar	£469		Slimline, moderately wideangle manual-focus lens for APS-C mirrorless cameras, available in silver or black							·			17	43	59.3	23.5	115
23mm f/1.2 Nokton Aspherical	£629		Lightweight manual-focus lens for APS-C cameras that's available in both Fujifilm X and Nikon Z mounts						·	·			18	46	59.3	43.8	214
27mm f/2 Ultron	£449		Small, lightweight prime lens for Fujifilm cameras with a 41mm equivalent angle of view							·			25	43	59.3	23.5	120
35mm f/0.9 Nokton Aspherical	£1200		Ultra-fast manual-focus standard prime for Fujifilm APS-C cameras							·			35	62	72.7	64.9	492
35mm f/1.2 Nokton	£599		Fast standard prime for Fujifilm X and Nikon Z mounts is specifically designed for the smaller APS-C sensor						·	·			30	46	59.6	39.8	195
35mm f/2 Macro Apo-Ultron	£649		Manual focus macro lens for APS-C mirrorless offering half life-size magnification						·	·			16	49	60.7	58.4	265
50mm f/1.2 Nokton	£599		Large-aperture short-telephoto prime for APS-C mirrorless cameras with manual focus and aperture ring							·			39	58	63.9	49	290
10mm f/5.6 Hyper Wide Heliar	£749		Covers a phenomenal 130° angle of view, with optics designed to minimise distortion					·				·	50	n/a	67.8	58.7	312
15mm f/4.5 Super Wide Heliar III	£649		Compact, lightweight ultra-wideangle manual-focus prime that still accepts 58mm filters					·	·			·	30	58	66.4	62.3	294
21mm f/1.4 Nokton	£1149		Large-aperture wideangle prime specifically designed for Sony full-frame mirrorless cameras					·				·	25	62	70.5	79.5	560
21mm f/3.5 Color-Skopar Asph	£549		Compact wideangle prime with manual focus and aperture operation					·				·	20	52	62.8	39.9	230
NEW 28mm f/1.5 Nokton Aspherical	£799		Relatively small large-aperture wideangle prime, with manual focus and aperture control					·	·			·	28	49	62.6	55	320
35mm f/1.2 Nokton SE	£849		Super-fast yet relatively compact prime, with 'Still Edition' design optimised for photography not video					·				·	30	58	66.5	59.9	387
35mm f/1.4 Nokton Asph	£639		'Classic' lens based on symmetrical optical design that only uses spherical lens elements					·				·	30	58	67	39.6	262
35mm f/2 Apo-Lanthar	£899		Promises the highest resolution and colour correction of all of Voigtländer's E-mount lenses					·	·			·	35	49	62.5	67.3	352
40mm f/1.2 Nokton	£810		World's first full-frame lens with a super-fast f/1.2 aperture, promising pleasing bokeh			·		·	·			·	35	58	70.1	59.3	420
40mm f/1.2 Nokton SE	£749		'Stills Edition' version of this fast prime is smaller, lighter and more affordable					·				·	35	58	66.5	51.9	340
50mm f/1.0 Nokton Asph	£1699		Impressively compact ultra-large-aperture manual focus lens for Canon RF, Nikon Z, and Sony E mount			·		·	·			·	45	62	67.6	66.6	598
50mm f/1.2 Nokton	£899		Super-fast manual-focus prime boasts 12 aperture blades for attractive background blur					·				·	45	58	70.1	58.8	434
50mm f/1.2 Nokton SE	£849		SE version does without switchable clicked/clickless aperture mechanism					·				·	45	58	66.5	58.5	383
50mm f/2 Apo-Lanthar	£869		Fully manual lens with apochromatic optics designed to completely eliminate colour fringing					·	·			·	45	49	62.6	61.3	354
65mm f/2 Macro Apo-Lanthar	£749		High-quality apochromatic macro lens designed for Sony mirrorless offers half life-size reproduction					·	·			·	31	67	78	91.3	625
75mm f/1.5 Nokton Aspherical	£849		Short telephoto, manual-focus portrait lens for Canon RF-mount mirrorless cameras			·						·	50	62	71.9	74	525
110mm f/2.5 Macro Apo-Lanthar	£899		Manual-focus macro lens with 1:1 magnification and premium apochromatic optics					·				·	35	58	78.4	99.7	771

ZEISS MIRRORLESS

LENS	RRP	SCORE	SUMMARY	IMAGE STABILISATION	CANON M	CANON RF	MICRO 4 THIRDS	SONY E	NIKON Z	FUJIFILM X	LEICA L	FULL FRAME	MIN FOCUS (CM)	FILTER THREAD (MM)	DIAMETER (MM)	LENGTH (MM)	WEIGHT (G)
Touit 12mm f/2.8 Distagon T*	£959	5★	Designed specifically for Sony NEX and Fujifilm X-series CSC cameras. Very impressive performance					·		·			18	67	82	68	270
Touit 32mm f/1.8 Planar T*	£700	4.5★	Optimised for use with APS-C format sensors, a fast standard lens for Fujifilm X-series cameras					·		·			23	52	72	76	200
Touit 50mm f/2.8 Planar T*	£589		Macro 1:1 lens for extreme close-ups, as well as shooting portraits or panoramas as a light tele-lens					·		·			15	52	75	91	290
Batis 18mm f/2.8	£990		The Batis range is for mirrorless full-frame system cameras from Sony					·				·	25	77	78	95	330
Loxia 21mm f/2	£1230		Compact manual-focus wideangle prime purpose-designed for Sony Alpha 7-series cameras					·				·	25	52	62	72	394
Batis 25mm f/2	£980	5★	A wideangle lens for Sony full-frame users offering unrivalled quality					·				·	20	67	81	92	355
Loxia 25mm f/2.4	£1190	5★	Gorgeous but ever-so-pricey compact manual focus prime, with absolutely stunning optics					·				·	25	52	62	69.5	375
Loxia 35mm f/2	£1015		Small wideangle manual-focus prime intended for Sony Alpha 7 users					·				·	30	52	62	59	340
Batis 40mm f/2 CF	£1130	5★	Bridges the gap between Batis 25mm and 85mm lenses and features close-focusing ability					·				·	24	67	91	93	361
Loxia 50mm f/2	£740		Manual-focus standard prime with premium optics and E mount for Sony Alpha 7 users					·				·	45	52	62	59	320
Batis 85mm f/1.8	£909	5★	A high-quality medium prime for wedding and portrait shooters, developed for Sony's Alpha 7 series	·				·				·	80	67	78	105	475
Loxia 85mm f/2.4	£1199		A compact, manual-focus, short telephoto lens for the mirrorless Sony Alpha series					·				·	80	52	62.5	108	594
Batis 135mm f/2.8	£1749	5★	Absolutely stunning, super-sharp image-stabilised portrait lens for Sony full-frame mirrorless	·				·				·	87	67	84	120	614

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RF 24-70 F2.8 IS USM box	£1799
RF 24-105 F4 L IS	£999
RF 24-105 F4/7.3 IS STM	£329
RF 35 F1.8 IS macro	£399
RF 50 F1.2 L USM box	£1499
RF 70-200 F2.8 L IS USM box	£2199
RF 85 F2 macro box	£499
RF 100 F2.8 L IS USM macro	£1099
RF 100-500 F4.5/7.1 L IS USM	£2299
RF 600 F11	£499
RF 800 F11	£599
BG-R10 grip (fit R5/6)	£249

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650D body	£299
BG-E21/20/16/14/13/11/9/8 each	£99

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EF-M 15-45 F3.5/6.3 IS STM	£79
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24-105 F4 IS USM L	£499
28-300 F3.5/5.6 L IS USM box	£699
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50 F1.2 L USM box	£799
50 F1.4 USM box	£249
60 F2.8 macro EFS	£299
65 F2.8 MP-E macro box	£799
70-200 F2.8 IS USM LIII box	£1299
70-200 F2.8 IS USM LII	£899
70-300 F4/5.6 IS USM L	£699
70-300 F4/5.6 IS USM II Nano	£499
85 F1.2 U L	£799
85 F1.8 U	£299
100 F2.8 IS USM L macro	£699
100 F2.8 USM macro box	£299
100-400 F4.5/5.6 LII box	£1499
100-400 F4.5/5.6 LII box	£999
100-400 f4.5/5.6 IS USM l Box	£699
180 F3.5 L USM macro	£699
200-400 F4 IS USM	£4999
300 F2.8 IS USM LII	£2999
300 F4 IS USM L box	£599
400 F4 DO IS II USM	£3799
500 F4 IS USM LII	£4499
1.4x or 2x extender MKIII each	£329

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24-105 F4 DG OS box	£399
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D7100 b/o box	£399
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SQAi prism late	£399
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501CM body chrome + WLF	£1699
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120 F4 CFI	£999
150 F4 CFI	£799
150 F4 CF	£499
150 F4 Black T*	£399
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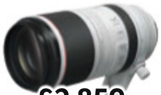

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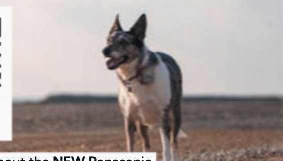

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Final Analysis

John Wade considers...

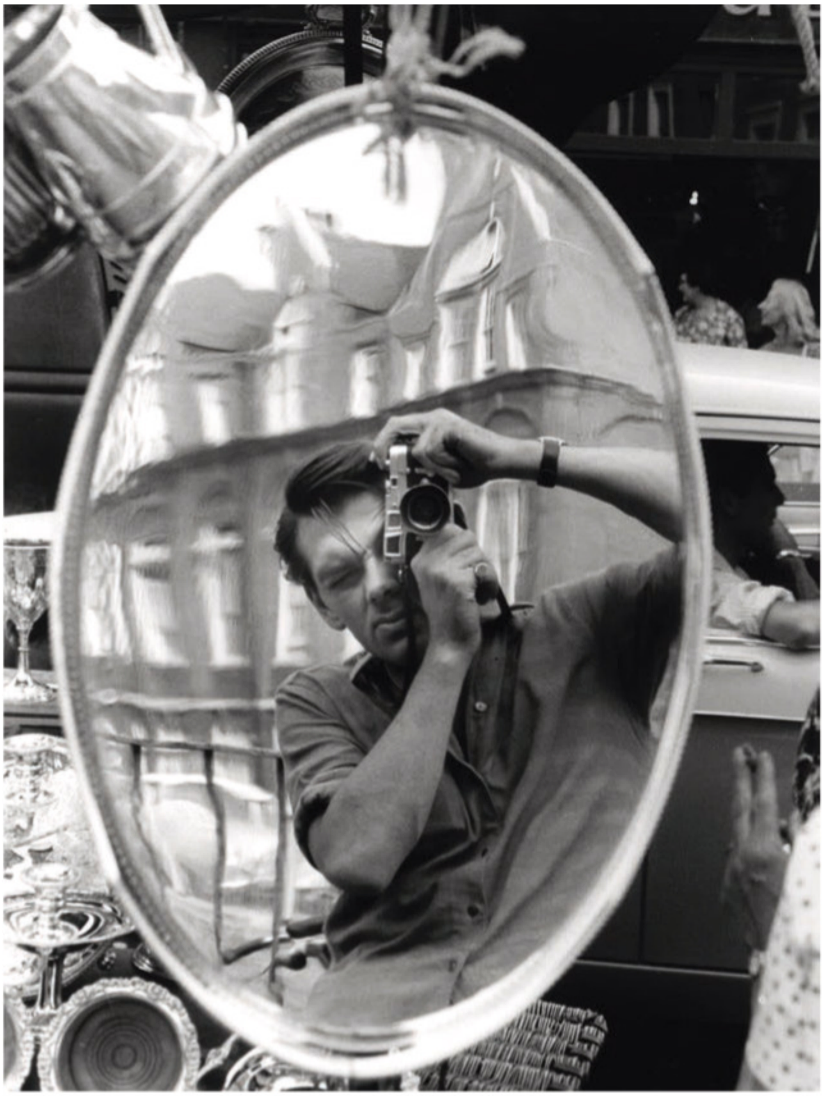
Michael Ward reflected, 1959

These days, I'm probably more of a camera collector than camera user. There are of course collectors who actually use their cameras. Me, I'm one of those who buy a camera, research and write about it, then put it on a shelf and look at it. Every so often, however, a collectable camera comes along that demands to be used. As I discovered some years ago when I acquired my Leica M3.

I've written about the M3 elsewhere in this issue, from a technical and historical viewpoint. But reading about it will never prepare you for what it's like to actually handle an M3. Its deceptively simple design is an ergonomic masterpiece. I remember taking mine for a day trip to Brighton, loving its big bright viewfinder; how the wind lever was like stroking a hot knife through butter; the way the focal plane shutter didn't click or clack, it just whispered; but most of all how the camera seemed to become an extension of my fingers, rather than an actual held object.

Enough eulogising. Here's photographer Michael Ward, wandering with his M3 through London's Portobello Road market in 1959. On Saturdays the market was then, and still is, a cornucopia of antique shops and street trader stalls where Ward evidently discovered a huge silver tray and decided to shoot his reflection in it. Now, I'm aware of the old saying: it's not the camera that takes the picture, it's the photographer behind it. But the thing about the M3 is, it seems to entice you into noticing unexpected picture possibilities. I'm willing to bet that seconds before he pressed the shutter release, Ward didn't realise what he was about to do. No planning, just instinct – and an M3.

Ward worked mainly, though not exclusively, for *The Sunday Times*. He was known for his creative photo essays in the worlds of business, politics, theatre, fashion and war zones; his work is included in the permanent collection of the National Portrait Gallery. He had an eye for the unexpected and the knack of bringing out the best in his human subjects. Yet, towards the end of his career he wrote that his knowledge of photography was little more than that of the average amateur, that he was far from accomplished technically and often unsure what separated a good picture from an indifferent one.



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A glance at his work reveals his unnecessary modesty. He shared with Henri Cartier-Bresson (another avid Leica user) that knack of capturing The Decisive Moment: actress Julie Christie in 1963 seemingly caught unexpectedly in a cluttered dressing table mirror; two women in Northern Ireland walking along a road in 1977, casually chatting, oblivious to the armed soldiers they are passing; the Beatles in 1963 looking impossibly young on Liverpool Docks; the Queen in 1977, riding on Horse Guards Parade, her profiled face sharply defined amid a sea of out-of-focus umbrellas. I won't go on. Google his name and see for yourself.

Michael Ward died in 2011, leaving behind a legacy of uniquely distinctive and individualistic pictures from what he once estimated as something like 5,500 assignments. The Leica M3 was superseded by the M4 in 1967. Both their legends live on.

John Wade is best known for his regular contributions to AP on classic cameras. He is the author of 25 books on social and photographic history. Find him at **www.johnwade.org**

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